

ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS 2006-07

Making a difference...



Teenage lads, Brixton



Joanne, Great Western Hospital



Charlie and Helen, Leicester



Mark Stewart, Pwys



Terry, Brick Lane Market



Andrew, Great Yarmouth



Mark, Elaine and Isobel, Brighton



Ravi, India



Jordan and friends, Peterborough



Callum and Julie, Harrogate



Liby and Louise, Greater Manchester



Henry, Route 55, Birmingham



Sylvia and Albert, Warrington



unknown, Liverpool



Tracey and Mick, Agr



PC Warwick, Bradford

THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL RESEARCH
COUNCIL'S ROLE IS:

To promote and support, by any means, high-quality basic, strategic and applied research and related postgraduate training in the social sciences.

To advance knowledge and provide trained social scientists who meet the needs of users and beneficiaries, thereby contributing to the economic competitiveness of the United Kingdom, the effectiveness of public services and policy, and the quality of life.

To provide advice on, and disseminate knowledge and promote public understanding of, the social sciences.

ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS 2006-07

Making a difference...

In accordance with Schedule 1 to the Science and Technology Act, 1965, the Economic and Social Research Council submits the following Report on its activities from 1 April 2006 to 31 March 2007, on Thursday 19 July 2007.

Ordered by the House of Commons to be printed on Thursday 19 July 2007.

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Statement by Chairman and Chief Executive



Professor Ian Diamond FBA, AcSS
Chief Executive
ESRC

The 2006-07 year has been a successful one for the ESRC. Most significantly for us as a research council, the research community that we exist to support is in excellent shape, as the examples in this report show. We continue to help to sustain their efforts by ensuring that the ESRC is effective, responsive and adequately resourced.

We believe that the quality of the research we support fully justifies the sums of public money we attract. We were especially pleased that the Chancellor of the Exchequer acknowledged the importance and excellence of UK research in his budget speech in March 2007, and that he confirmed the Government's continuing support for the ten-year Science and Innovation Investment Framework. The budget announced offers real growth of 2.5 per cent a year in public spending on research over the next Comprehensive Spending Review period.

In common with our six colleague research councils, we await details of our future financial outlook, which will be contained in this autumn's science budget allocation announcement by the Office of Science and Innovation. We are sure that we have made a case for continued growth in the resources available to the research councils. We have shown that British research is of high quality by world standards and helps support the most innovative areas of the UK economy.

The social science research supported by the ESRC is consistently first or second in the world as measured by citations in leading journals. We intend to maintain or improve this position in as many of the research areas we support as possible. The UK's high reputation in social science research means that we are sought after as research partners by other social scientists around the world. We now regard ourselves as a global organisation, competing and collaborating with other top social scientists on an international stage. Both in our own right and in conjunction with the other research councils, via Research Councils UK (RCUK), we are expanding our international activities by increasing the range of research organisations with which we have formal agreements, and by opening new RCUK offices in major centres across the globe to build new connections for our research.

We wish to thank our colleagues on ESRC council and the staff of the ESRC for their hard work during this year, especially Professor Fiona Devine, who has just stepped down from her council membership. We note with sadness the death of two former council members, Andrew Winckler and Professor Hadyn Ellis.

We are delighted to welcome our new chairman Adair Turner, Lord Turner of Echinswell. We look forward to his contribution to the next phase of ESRC's development.



Frances Cairncross
Chairman
ESRC

I am reporting here for the last time in my role as chairman of ESRC. The six years during which I have chaired the council have been a period of rapid change and growth. The ESRC is now much larger than before. Its budget has grown from £73 million in 2001-02 to £169 million in 2006-07. Perhaps more importantly, our priorities have been redefined in the extensive strategic review that we carried out in 2005.

As a journalist, I have been especially interested in the way the ESRC communicates the excellent research it supports, and in the important process which I have come to know as knowledge transfer. I am particularly pleased with the recent launch of *Britain Today*, which I hope will turn into a regular publication which makes social science accessible to the public. In the same spirit, I am delighted with the progress of the ESRC's innovative website, which helps bring the best in UK social science to a worldwide audience.

While the overall picture is a positive one, the ESRC and its partner organisations face some difficult long-term issues. We should recognise more distinctly the connection between excellent teaching and high-quality research in universities. Good teaching is the ultimate in knowledge transfer. It is essential to creating the next generation of social scientists, and research councils should do more to encourage it.

Another concern is the continuing decline in mathematical understanding among young people in the UK. This issue has arisen from my connection with the ESRC and was also a focus of my recent term as president of the British Association for the Advancement of Science. In 2000, 66,000 people took A-level maths, but in 2006 the total was only 51,000. Mathematics is fundamental to understanding the social sciences, as well as other areas of science and technology, and to becoming a successful researcher. The UK needs far more people who are comfortable with mathematical reasoning. I am delighted that ESRC is supporting research on improving school mathematics teaching, and hope that it will continue to play a part in solving this national problem.

My first statement as chairman of ESRC referred to the broad scope of the social sciences, their ability to help find solutions to many of society's most acute problems, and their potential to help change lives for the better. I believe that ESRC is now better equipped than ever to support the best social science research and ensure it is known about and used effectively.

My time as chairman of ESRC has been enjoyable and fulfilling, and the organisation which Adair Turner is taking over is well placed for the future. I wish to thank the council members and staff of ESRC for the commitment and hard work which have made our success possible.



A handwritten signature of Adair Turner in a gold-colored ink, written in a cursive style.

Adair Turner
Chairman
ESRC

I am delighted to have taken over from Frances Cairncross as chairman of the ESRC. During her highly successful time as chairman, the ESRC has grown in size, influence and importance. It has continued to play a crucial role as the primary funder of social science research in the UK, expanded its international contacts to encourage and support British researchers in internationally focused research, and placed a growing emphasis on knowledge transfer, ensuring that the insights from research are disseminated to potential users in government and business.

The research which the ESRC supports includes some of the highest quality social science in the world, addressing vitally important issues for British and global society. An increasing proportion of that research crosses disciplinary boundaries, and an increasing proportion has an international dimension. The ESRC has also played a key role in developing the next generation of social scientists through its studentships and fellowships, and has supported the development and maintenance of major databases on which much social science research draws. Looking forward, our challenge is to build on existing strengths.

As a former chair of the Low Pay Commission and of the Pensions Commission, I have been very aware of the need for a robust social science research base to help deliver effective evidence based solutions to the policy dilemmas which society faces. Excellent academic research of empirical questions needs to be based on a sound theoretical base: good policy thinking requires people trained in social science disciplines; and good statistical databases are essential. In numerous areas of public policy – from education to social work, health service management to pensions policy, criminal justice to environmental protection – excellent social science helps provide better answers.

It is therefore essential that the ESRC's funded research continues to address the most challenging questions facing our society, and the ESRC must be involved in a continual process of identifying major research themes and priorities. The seven key research challenges set out on page 19 reflect the Council's latest definition of those priorities. But it is also vital that the ESRC continues to fund excellent research addressing fundamental theoretical issues, and that it supports research which is intellectually innovative but falls within no predetermined priority, provided only that the academic quality is excellent. As the ESRC's funder, government has a right to ask for outputs from social science research which helps government, business and the voluntary sector address the pressing questions they face, but a space for academic inquiry for its own sake must be preserved, since that inquiry will nurture the insights and capabilities which may help address future questions not yet identified.

Whatever the issues which research addresses, however, communication of results, knowledge transfer to potential users or to other researchers, is a vital criterion of high quality. Over the last five years, the ESRC has put significant resources into encouraging researchers to ensure that the implications of their findings can be understood beyond the ranks of their academic peers. Our ambitious website, *ESRC Society Today*, contains a wealth of material for the general public and the media, such as plain English accounts of the research we support and a search facility to allow journalists to find an expert in any area of the social sciences. In more traditional media, we published the first issue of *Britain Today* early in 2007, and a second edition will appear in the winter. This publication is intended to convey the value and excitement of current social science research to a broad audience, and has been well received.

This part of our work will continue to grow in importance in future years, and as someone who comes from a business background I hope that in addition to maintaining our excellent connections with government and voluntary sector, we will increasingly make connections with commerce and industry, helping business understand how social science insights can inform better business decisions.

During my time as chairman, the ESRC will, I am sure, need to evolve to address new social science questions, and new challenges facing the academic research community. But it will do that building on great strengths inherited from the past, and on a strong enduring commitment to the value of social science research as a vital contributor to a successful and civilized society.

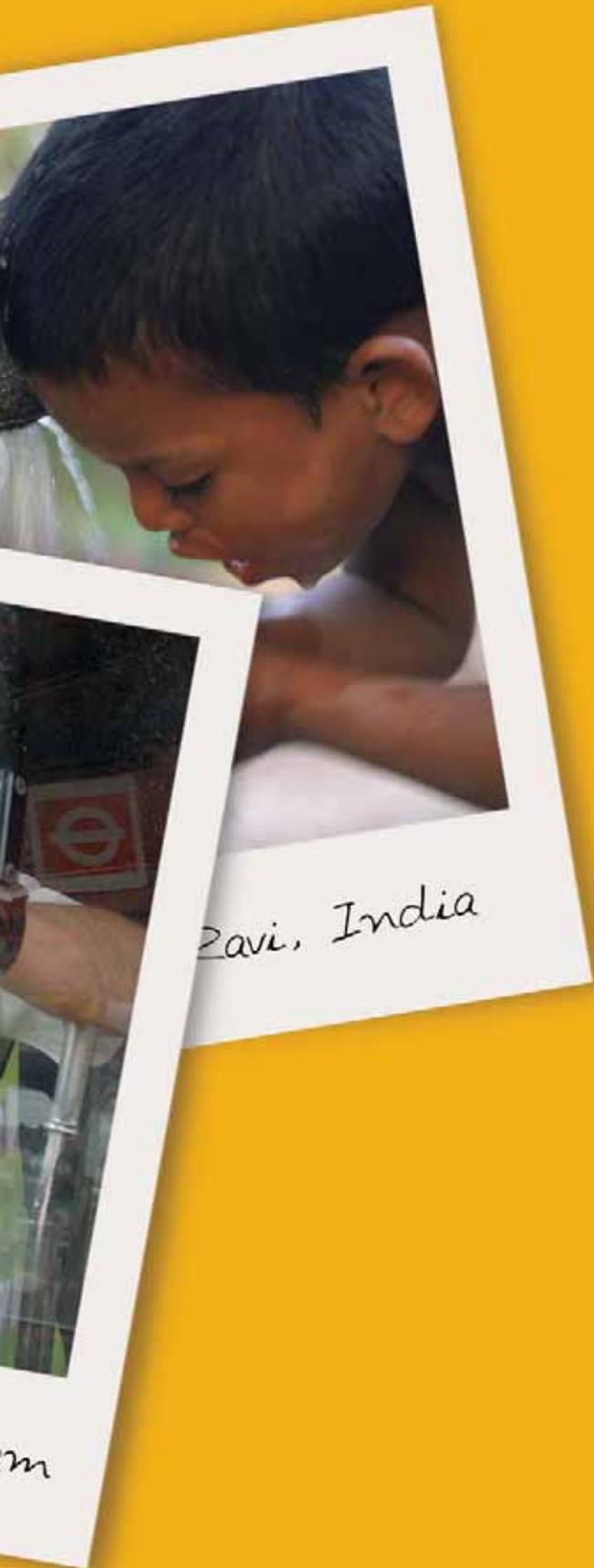


Charlie and Helen, Leicester



Henry, Route 55, Birmingham





Management Commentary

Delivering World Class
Social Science

Supporting World Class
Social Science Research

Strengthening the Social
Science Research Base:
Data and Methods

International Work: Maximising
Our International Presence

Training: Strengthening
Our Future Capacity

Science in Society

Knowledge Transfer

Making Headlines

ESRC Society Today

Delivering World Class Social Science

Social science researchers throughout the UK are currently tackling the key social and economic questions that need to be answered to improve life in Britain today while also looking ahead at the research priorities of tomorrow.

To build this knowledge base for improving life now and in the future, we support the highest quality research wherever it is found, using independent peer review to measure and guarantee quality. Assisted by consultations with social scientists and users of social science within the UK and around the world, we have developed a research strategy based on a series of key challenges.

The ESRC's top-quality researchers are addressing the key challenges we face: enhancing the performance of the UK economy; succeeding in the global economy; energy, the environment and climate change; education for life; understanding individual behaviour; population change; international security; and the complex interactions between religion, ethnicity and society.

By pursuing this strategy, we aim to ensure that our research counts locally and globally, over both the short and long-term, in both current policies and on the way we think about the future.

Britain Today



Britain Today is a magazine showcasing the diversity of ESRC-funded research around the state of the nation in 2007. It offers a concise analysis of research and topical issues concerning Britain today.

"*Britain Today* is an excellent example of communicating how social science research can make a real difference to people's lives. The magazine conveys how ESRC research is at the centre of some of society's most crucial issues and is directly relevant to people's lives, combining academic opinion pieces with informed journalistic writing from well known and respected names. I am sure that *Britain Today* will be read and enjoyed by those with an interest in debate and current affairs, social sciences and UK society."

MALCOLM WICKS MP

Minister of State for Science and Innovation

✦ <http://www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk/britaintoday>

Policymakers briefed on genomics

As part of the ESRC Festival of Social Science, the ESRC Genomics Policy and Research Forum hosted a briefing for members of the Scottish Parliament, their staff and other interested policymakers. The meeting provided Scottish policymakers with a glimpse into the broad ranging and important work being done by the ESRC Genomics Network. Speakers discussed how evidence is incorporated into policymaking, how public engagement initiatives can influence the policy process, and how policy initiatives have unintended outcomes. One presentation analysed how public views on a controversial political topic such as stem cells can inform policymaking. Another examined how family history shaped treatment of heart disease. In addition to formal presentation and discussion periods, the event also provided an opportunity for researchers to mix with policymakers on an informal basis.

✦ <http://www.genomicsforum.ac.uk>

Achieving low carbon lifestyles



"There could hardly be a more exciting and important time to be launching this research group."

How can the UK meet the challenge of achieving 'low carbon lifestyles'? This was the question posed at the launch of the new ESRC Research Group on Lifestyles, Values and Environment (RESOLVE). More than 200 people heard speakers including environmentalist Jonathon Porritt, BBC *Newsnight's* Justin Rowlett, and *The Guardian* columnist Madeleine Bunting, debate how sustainable living may be encouraged and unsustainable living discouraged.

How can we persuade people to live and work in more socially responsible ways? Such questions lie at the heart of the emerging

debate about achieving a low carbon economy. Professor Tim Jackson, who heads the University of Surrey-based RESOLVE research group, commented: "There could hardly be a more exciting and important time to be launching this research group. At home and abroad, the threat of climate change is finally beginning to be taken seriously. RESOLVE is ideally placed to provide policymakers with a robust evidence base on which to encourage sustainable lifestyles and build a low carbon economy."

✦ <http://www.surrey.ac.uk/resolve>

Public services on display

Initial findings from the ESRC Public Services Programme and details of future projects were presented to policymakers at the Treasury through a novel poster display and presentation. After viewing the poster exhibition, delegates had the opportunity to quiz the Programme Director, Professor Christopher Hood, and other researchers on these findings and the challenges they pose for policymakers. Introducing the event, Permanent Secretary of the Treasury, Nick Macpherson, said that he welcomed the opportunity to deepen the Treasury's dialogue with the research community and noted that the issues explored by the ESRC Public Services Programme reflect the very themes with which the Treasury is currently grappling.

✦ <http://www.publicservices.ac.uk>

Corporate governance Ideas Factory

Researchers from the fields of accounting, management, business, law and finance explored the topic of corporate governance at the ESRC's first Ideas Factory. Held in conjunction with the Department for Trade and Industry and the Advanced Institute of Management Research, the Ideas Factory brought together groups of academics in a two-day residential workshop to debate and explore issues with the aim of generating new and insightful research avenues. During this the first Ideas Factory, participants were encouraged to think outside their traditional research areas and reassess the key issues that impact on the topic of corporate governance. At the end of the session, teams of participants presented their research proposals to each other for live 'peer review'.

✦ <http://www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk/corpgov>

Food for thought



“The students also carried out biological and policy exercises around themes of genetic modification.”

Professor Steve Yearley and Dr Emma Frow from the ESRC Genomics Policy and Research Forum received an enthusiastic reception from students and teachers when they participated in Food for Thought: A GM Debate – a pilot project developed by the Scottish Science Centres with sponsorship from the Scottish Executive. Held at the Dynamic Earth Centre in Edinburgh, a science centre that focuses on earth history and the history of the biosphere, these one-day events were designed to encourage Scottish Highers students studying biology to explore some of the social, environmental and scientific issues surrounding GM crops. Professor Yearley and Dr Frow ‘expert scientists’ at the two events in Edinburgh, gave presentations to 30 students and were then interviewed press conference style by small groups of students. Helped by trained facilitators, the students also carried out biological and policy exercises around themes of genetic modification and GM regulation. In the afternoon, the school students made their own policy presentations which Professor Yearley and Dr Frow discussed and evaluated.

✦ <http://www.genomicsforum.ac.uk>

New funding for disease research

Funding of £7 million has been awarded to ten new projects within the Rural Economy and Land Use (RELU) Programme. RELU is funded jointly by ESRC, the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council and the Natural Environment Research Council. Six of the projects bring together teams of natural and social scientists for the first time to research the management of animal and plant

diseases in the UK. Researchers aim to find strategies for preventing and dealing with these problems and will consider a wide range of issues involved in disease outbreaks including the effect of changes in the countryside, technological developments, increasing globalisation, and the part played by public perceptions and concerns.

✦ <http://www.relu.ac.uk>

Delivering World Class Social Science

Crisis management

Issues ranging from aviation safety and the Asian Tsunami to crisis management in European governance and institutions were debated at a joint workshop hosted by the ESRC Centre for the Analysis of Risk and Regulation, in conjunction with the Leiden Crisis Research Centre and the Swedish Institute of International Affairs. Participants discussed critical intersections between risk regulation and institutions, and capital management. A clear consensus emerged regarding the need for closer examination of how crisis management contributes to the development of risk regulation regimes.

✦ <http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/CARR>

New research on religion

A new £8.5 million collaborative research investment on religion will offer faith communities, policymakers, charitable and voluntary bodies, creative industries, cultural and heritage sectors and the general public some practical insight into the role of religion in society today. The ESRC Religion and Society Research Programme, jointly funded by the ESRC and the Arts and Humanities Research Council, is designed to create understanding of the role of religion in shaping our lives and wider society. Programme Director, Professor Linda Woodhead, believes this research initiative is urgently needed. "Theories of secularisation, arguing that religion has all died out and is socially and politically insignificant, have clearly failed," she says. "Rather, here is this very, very, live force in western and world societies yet people have not been researching it adequately." Issues under review in this research programme include the role of religion in both violence and peace-making, the influence of religious beliefs on issues such as religious identity, concepts of multiculturalism, and how faith and secularity can live together.

✦ http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/apply/research/sfi/ahrsci/religion_society.asp

The Edge



The Edge brings the latest and most topical social science research to key opinion formers in business, government and the voluntary sector. Published three times a year it highlights research currently being undertaken by the UK's leading social scientists and demonstrates how social science research can contribute to better policymaking and, ultimately, a better society.

"The subject of 'belief' is very relevant to our pupils' religious studies and the issues that they research and debate as part of the English syllabus."

"Thank you for sending me the two additional copies of your July issue of *The Edge* (Issue 22). The subject of 'belief' is very relevant to our pupils' religious studies and the issues that they research and debate as part of the English syllabus. The teaching staff are using your insightful and accessible articles to spark off some class discussions and have incorporated them in the cross-curricular projects which we are planning for next year as part of the revised curriculum. I have passed my library copy on to the Head of Religious Studies and catalogued one of the extra copies to catalogue as part of a project pack on Religious Issues. I have

already made use of your articles on Aging in Issue 20 and Choices in Education (Issue 23) in similar project packs."

RUTH FARR

School Librarian
Glenola Collegiate School, County Down,
Northern Ireland.

✦ <http://www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk/theedge>

Evidence for excellence

The Local Authority Research Council Initiative (LARCI) and Swindon Borough Council jointly hosted a one-day conference on the topic of Evidence for Excellence. Dick Sorabji, Head of Policy and Research at the New Local Government Network chaired the event, which successfully brought together local authority research officers, academics and key staff from the

Research Councils to showcase excellence, debate common issues and promote future collaborations. Using practical examples and case studies, delegates learned how local authorities, LARCI and the Research Councils benefit from working together. For example, Professor Julienne Hanson from University College London and John Barratt from the Pocklington Trust

explained how research on telecare systems is helping older people to live independently. In masterclass sessions, delegates learned more about LARCI and how to make best use of it, how to influence future research funding priorities and how to access Research Council funding and commission research.

✦ <http://www.larci.org.uk>

Debating e-Health



A two-day colloquium on The Health, the Body and the e-Society, organised by the ESRC e-Society Research Programme, featured discussion and debate on the state of knowledge in the e-Health arena. Among the presentations Professor Andrew Webster, national co-ordinator of the ESRC Stem Cells Initiative, highlighted the 2006 Royal Society report: *Digital healthcare: the impact of information and communication*. The theme of access to e-Health resources was further discussed by Professor Ann Blandford of University College London who talked about her work on the National Electronic Library for Health. The presentations provided an opportunity for discussion and debate amongst an interdisciplinary group associated with the e-Society Programme. More broadly, participants discussed the nature of expertise and relationships between practitioners and users. The internet means that for many people health and wellness information is always global. Hence, one of the challenges for researchers is not only to map changes in their conceptualisations of health and illness but also to understand how they shape and impact on the delivery of health care.

✦ <http://www.york.ac.uk/res/e-society>

“The internet means that for many people health and wellness information is always global.”

Honours for social scientists

Professor Sarah Spencer was awarded a CBE for services to equal opportunities and human rights. Professor Spencer is Associate Director at the ESRC Centre on Migration, Policy and Society and head of the programme on migration management, where her particular interest is in migrant integration and equality issues and in the policymaking process. Professor Spencer is Chair of the Equality and Diversity Forum, the network of equality and human rights organisations, and a Visiting Professor at the Human Rights Centre, University of Essex. Ruth Durrell, of the ESRC Research Methods Programme, was awarded an MBE for services to social sciences. Ruth is an administrator at the programme which is based at the University of Manchester.

Advice for Competition Commission

Professor Ian Clarke, Chair in Marketing at Lancaster University Management School and Senior Fellow of the ESRC Advanced Institute of Management Research (AIM), was one of four academics invited to advise the Competition Commission on its current market investigation into the supply of groceries by retailers in the UK. Local competition is one of the three key issues the Competition Commission is investigating in its on-going deliberations. Professor Clarke has experience of working for Tesco plc and has conducted an ESRC-funded project on consumers' experience of local competition. He is currently conducting a large-scale quantitative study of consumer choice as one of his AIM research projects.

✦ <http://www.aimresearch.org>

STEPS to sustainability

“Today’s world is experiencing rapid social, technological and environmental change.”



How do we deal with the spread of HIV/Aids or avian ‘flu’? Who benefits from GM crops? Is there enough water for people to survive the 21st century? Today’s world is experiencing rapid social, technological and environmental change. But poverty and inequality are growing. What new concepts, methods and policy arrangements are needed to respond to such challenges? The new £3.8 million ESRC Social, Technological and Environmental Pathways to Sustainability Centre (STEPS) a

global interdisciplinary research and policy engagement hub aims to address these questions. Based at the Institute of Development Studies and Science and Technology Policy Research at the University of Sussex, and with partners in Asia, Africa and Latin America, STEPS is developing a new

‘pathways’ approach to understanding the interactions between dynamic social, technological and ecological systems. Says STEPS Director Professor Melissa Leach: “To meet the global challenges facing us new approaches are needed that can properly address how rapid social, technological and ecological change interact in the real settings in which poor people live.”

✦ <http://www.steps-centre.org>

International benchmarking review



Anthropologist Marilyn Strathern, Papua New Guinea, 1976. Photograph courtesy of the Royal Anthropological Institute.

An international benchmarking review of UK social anthropology identifies the UK as world leader in many areas. The review concludes that the UK has been one of the intellectual heartlands of anthropology and that the quality of current work remains very high. Social anthropology is popular at postgraduate level, and has considerable success as an 'exporter' discipline with postgraduates actively recruited into academic positions in other fields. The review further identified many areas where social anthropology has had an impact within the UK and beyond. For example, social anthropologists have become key figures

in human rights, asylum, and other justice-related work. This benchmarking review, carried out in partnership with the Association of Social Anthropologists and the Royal Anthropological Society, is the first in a series of reviews that the ESRC aims to conduct across the social sciences in partnership with professional bodies and other social science funders. The next review is of UK Politics and International Studies and is being carried out in partnership with the Political Studies Association and the British International Studies Association.

✦ <http://www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk/intbenrev>

"Social anthropologists have become key figures in human rights, asylum, and other justice-related work."

Integrating migrants

The better integration of migrants into the UK was the theme of a conference organised by the ESRC Centre on Migration, Policy and Society. Representatives from government, NGOs, academia and business met to discuss ways in which the non-governmental sector could be given greater support for the important function it provides in supporting the economic, social, cultural and political integration of migrants. The speakers included Joan Ryan MP, Under Secretary of State for Nationality, Citizenship and Immigration, Chris Melvin, Managing Director, Reed in Partnership, Jack Dromey, Deputy General Secretary, Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU), Trevor Phillips, Chair of the Commission for Racial Equality and Maeve Sherlock, CEO of the Refugee Council. Participating organisations included the unions TGWU and UNISON, business organisations Employability Forum and Business in the Community, and community organisations b:RAP and PRAXIS.

✦ <http://www.compas.ox.ac.uk>

The role of autonomy in wellbeing

Is autonomy central to personal wellbeing? In Western countries, perhaps. But is autonomy still key to wellbeing in countries where people struggle to make a living and value their ties with others over their ability to go it alone? New research from the ESRC Research Group on Wellbeing in Developing Countries challenges conventional thinking on autonomy. A study of people in towns and villages in Bangladesh identifies that autonomy is indeed important to quality of life. But gender makes a difference, with women focused more on family relationships, while men emphasise personal achievement and recognition in the community. Researchers point out that, rather than an individual concern, people in Bangladesh seek autonomy in collective ways. Landless people, for example, have found that



Photo courtesy of Anne Yates, WeD

organising together gives them more autonomy from the dominance of landlord patrons – as individuals, as family households and as a social group. Autonomy, researchers conclude, is important to personal wellbeing but politics, society and culture make a difference to the form it takes.

✦ <http://www.welldev.org.uk>

The pros and cons of baby signing

Experts on the topical issue of baby signing took part in a debate organised by the ESRC Deafness, Cognition and Language Research Centre (DCAL). The number of baby signing classes, books, videos and DVDs is rising rapidly with many arguing that it helps babies communicate before they can speak. Some also believe that teaching young babies to sign will improve their intelligence and behaviour. However, others disagree strongly, questioning whether it aids child development and ignores the main purpose of learning sign language. At the debate, Dr Gwyneth Doherty-Sneddon from the University of Stirling and Dr Gary Morgan from DCAL presented views for and against baby signing. Dr Tyron Woolfe, also from DCAL, offered a deaf community perspective on signing for hearing babies.

✦ <http://www.dcal.ucl.ac.uk>

Bringing local government and research closer

A closer relationship between local government and the Research Councils is key to securing better informed research, better informed policy, and better informed practice. This is one conclusion of a recent report prepared by the Centre for Local and Regional Government Research at Cardiff Business School on behalf of the Local Authority Research Councils Initiative (LARCI). The report, *A Strategic and Practical Partnership: The Research Councils of the UK and Local Government*, was commissioned to help LARCI develop its own way forward, and to inform its own business plan. Based on a series

of interviews, coupled with documentary analysis, the report addresses the following issues: What is needed to develop closer relationships between Research Councils and the Local Government sector? What machinery or processes might be called for? What initiatives should LARCI take, and how should it change, so as to seize the opportunity to help accomplish that mission? The report argues that a closer relationship has great potential for both sectors, and for wider public value. It recommends that local government and Research Councils should aim to 'co-produce' knowledge. And they should do so

through appropriate local government influence on the strategic research agenda in order to make that agenda more relevant, and through active knowledge transfer to optimise the benefits to be gained from research outputs. The report concludes that the recent *Local Government White Paper* as well as developments in the devolved territories help to confirm that this is the right moment to initiate a closer relationship and create a step change in the value added between local government and the Research Councils.

✦ <http://www.clrg:cg.ac.uk>

Strategic partnerships

ESRC's strategic partnerships with government departments, devolved administrations, research resource organisations and the umbrella organisation for the voluntary sector in England demonstrate our commitment to the principle of engagement which is one of the ESRC's key drivers. We now actively maintain 18 of these agreements. The partners not only share an understanding of the context in which both operate and the influences that affect their organisational priorities, but also they plan and deliver collaborative activities. For example, the Scottish Executive and ESRC have combined to undertake joint research on demographic trends in Scotland. A research activity on spatial economies is being planned with several government departments. Five departments have partnered with the ESRC to offer jointly-funded and jointly-supervised doctoral studentships. Six departments currently participate in the public sector placement scheme whereby academics spend up to a year in a government department working on defined projects that provide an evidence base for policy and contribute to staff development.

Debating public policy issues

"The goal is to encourage evidence-based policy through an exchange between researchers and policymakers."



In 2006-07 the ESRC organised 15 public policy seminars to tackle key public policy issues such as changing household and family structures, the impact of migration, tackling health inequalities and identifying pathways to participation. These lunchtime seminars are developed in collaboration with government departments, devolved administrations and national organisations and aim to bring the best social science concepts and evidence into the policy arena and stimulate a discussion of how policy can be developed. The goal is to encourage evidence-based policy through an exchange between researchers and policymakers. Each seminar is accompanied by a supporting publication which collates the

existing evidence base for the seminar topic. Other key topics covered in 2006-07 seminar series included private arrangements for parent-child contact; faith based voluntary action; demographic aspects of population ageing; health and wellbeing of working age people; employees and employers perspective; ICT, social capital and voluntary action; reducing re-offending in Scotland; wellbeing for children and young people; localism and local governance; waste consumption in Northern Ireland; and young people and risk taking.

✦ <http://www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk/policyseminar>

Delivering World Class Social Science

Influential neighbourhoods

A multi-disciplinary team of researchers from the ESRC Centre for Market and Public Organisation has completed a major research project on neighbourhoods and their possible influence on the lives of individuals. The work, funded through the ESRC Research Methods Programme, uses a unique match of datasets to produce some new findings on the influence of neighbourhood on income, mental health, voting, political attitudes and employment.

✦ <http://www.bris.ac.uk/cmpro>

Sustainable communities

The development of sustainable communities is set to benefit from a joint initiative between the ESRC and the Academy for Sustainable Communities. A number of independent, high-quality, small research grants will address a range of priority areas relating to the development of skills and knowledge for sustainable communities. There are over 100 occupations that contribute

to delivering sustainable communities and a range of generic skills such as leadership, community engagement, project management, partnership working and communication are required. But studies such as *The Egan Review: Skills for Sustainable Communities (2004)* have identified a range of gaps and shortages in the skills and knowledge required to deliver sustainable

communities. This research initiative aims to inform the development of policies and practices aimed at enhancing the skills and knowledge base, thereby helping to support the creation and renewal of local communities that are vibrant, prosperous and attractive to live in, now and in the future.

✦ <http://www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk/skillsforcommunities>

Award-winning Leeds partnership

“Knowledge Transfer Partnerships aim to foster innovation and accelerate wealth creation.”



An ESRC and Department of Trade and Industry funded Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP) between Leeds City Credit Union and the University of Leeds celebrated an award-winning collaboration at the 31st Annual KTP Awards Ceremony held in London. The partners received an ESRC-sponsored award for the ‘Best Application of Management or Social Science’ in recognition of the achievements of a two-year programme focused on the development of a marketing strategy for Leeds City Credit Union. The project achieved outstanding results including: a 35 per cent increase in savings

revenue, doubling of staff numbers, doubling of the number of savings and lending products available to customers, and development of the position of Leeds City Credit Union as a leading financial co-operative in the UK. The Leeds University Business School’s Credit Management Research Centre worked closely with the KTP Associate in Leeds City Credit Union to deliver this strategy. Knowledge Transfer Partnerships aim to foster innovation and accelerate wealth creation by forming a partnership between a knowledge base and a company in response to a specific, strategic business need.

Centres of Excellence for public health research

The major funders of public health research in the UK have come together under the auspices of the UK Clinical Research Collaboration to develop a co-ordinated approach to improving public health research. Funding will support a number of public health research Centres of Excellence in the UK. The aim of these centres is to build academic capacity, boost infrastructure and encourage multi-disciplinary working in public health research in the UK. The centres will bring together leading experts from a range of disciplines working in partnership with practitioners, policymakers and wider stakeholders in order to tackle complex public health issues that will potentially have a significant impact on the health of the nation.

This joint initiative is funded by the British Heart Foundation, Cancer Research UK, the Department of Health, the ESRC, the Medical Research Council, the Research and Development Office for the Northern Ireland Health and Social Services, the Wales Office of Research and Development, and the Wellcome Trust.

✦ <http://www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk/ukcr>

An up-to-date view of 1960s fashion



Paper dresses, 1967, © V&A Images/Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

“Emphasising its importance for the subsequent development of the capital as one of fashion’s world cities.”

An exhibition, ‘Sixties Fashion’, held at the Victoria and Albert Museum challenged the traditional views of ‘swinging London’ and the permissive society. In this exhibition, Professor Christopher Breward and Professor David Gilbert from the ESRC Cultures of Consumption Research Programme offer a new perspective on London’s fashion landscape between 1955-1975 – emphasising its importance for the subsequent development of the capital as one of fashion’s world cities. ‘Sixties Fashion’ reveals the influence of longer traditions of clothing production in the city, distinctive patterns of retailing and the pre-existence of particular markets and subcultures with specific tastes. For example, the legacy of aristocratic styles produced for an elite market by couturiers in 1950s Mayfair had a demonstrable effect on the output of Mary Quant in bohemian Chelsea. And Quant’s subversive artistic approach was equally adaptable and left its mark on the buyers of large department stores and chains in Knightsbridge and Oxford Street.

✦ <http://www.consume.bbk.ac.uk>

Improving older people’s lives

A new £20 million joint research investment, with the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council, the Biotechnology and Biological Research Council and the Medical Research Council, will provide some answers to the serious challenges posed by Britain’s ageing population. On reaching 65, people can now expect to live for another 20 years. But this increased life span has enormous implications for individuals, families and society as a whole including major policy issues such as pensions, employment, health and social care. The New Dynamics of Ageing Research Programme, directed by Professor Alan Walker, offers policymakers, professionals, practitioners, older people and the many UK organisations associated with care for this group key insight into improving the quality of life and health of Britain’s ageing population.

✦ <http://newdynamics.group.shef.ac.uk>

School choice

Affluent parents appear to be better at ‘working the system’ in order to ensure their children attend the best schools, according to new research on school choice from the ESRC Centre for Market and Public Organisation (CMPO). The CMPO Working Paper *School Assignment, School Choice and Social Mobility* looks at the influence of school assignment mechanisms on the chances of children from poor families attending good schools. Researchers Professor Simon Burgess and Adam Briggs show that even when comparing children living in the same place, poor children attend lower scoring schools than their more affluent neighbours. However, the most important source of disadvantage for poor families is where they live in relation to good schools, and it is this problem that a well-designed choice system should address.

✦ <http://www.bris.ac.uk/cmipo>

Low paid work

Is the picture of low paid work in Europe as bleak as that painted in the US by the 2004 Russell Sage Foundation project, *Low Wage America?* Researchers from the ESRC Centre on Skills, Knowledge and Organisational Performance, in association with the National Institute for Social and Economic Research, addressed this question in one of five parallel European studies commissioned by the Russell Sage Foundation. Research teams in the UK, France, Germany, Denmark and the Netherlands explored how the institutional, economic and social environment helped shape the relative prospects for workers with few qualifications. Findings reveal a high proportion of low waged workers in the UK in all sectors except call centres. Many workers are trapped within the lower ranks of the labour market with few prospects for escape, even if they have qualifications. The next phase of this Russell Sage Foundation project is a comparative analysis of the five European countries involved and the US.

✦ <http://www.skope.ox.ac.uk>

Delivering World Class Social Science

Competition proves uncompetitive

Initial optimism about the positive effects of competition in newly opened utility markets has been dimmed because many consumers have failed to play a textbook economics role. A large-scale survey undertaken by the ESRC Centre for Competition Policy reveals that electricity consumers are making poor decisions when switching suppliers. At least a quarter of consumers who switch electricity supplier to save money end up playing more as a result, losing £15 a year (about six per cent

of their bills) on average. The centre claims that consumers who switch to the 'wrong' supplier affect both their own budgets and those of other consumers by giving firms market power to increase prices. These findings call into question the view that consumer choice is an adequate replacement for regulation in disciplining suppliers.

✦ <http://www.ccp.uea.ac.uk>



Human Tissue Authority meeting

"This new authority faces a host of questions about the ramifications of scientific institutions carrying out research."

The creation of the Human Tissue Authority (HTA) by Parliament in 2004 illustrates the social and political significance of proper regulation of scientific research involving humans. But this new authority faces a host of questions about the ramifications of scientific institutions carrying out research. The ESRC Genomics Policy and Research Forum, based at the University of Edinburgh, hosted a one-day meeting involving policymakers, medical practitioners, industry representatives and leading academics from across the ESRC Genomics Network to discuss issues related to the HTA's remit. Speakers examined the context in which the Act was implemented, the relationship between medical research and tissue banks, the use of consent, and how the language of gift shapes tissue-banking practices. The meeting was designed to encourage participants to step back from some of the narrow debate surrounding particular policy questions and discuss the broader social, legal and political context of legislation and the regulations arising from it. Among the ideas explored were: the inadvertent consequences of legal regimes of regulation on medical and scientific research, the problems of consent practices, and the mix of concepts surrounding our understanding of the human body.

✦ <http://www.genomicsforum.ac.uk>

Collaboration on ethics

Professor Ruth Chadwick, Director of the ESRC Centre for Economic and Social Aspects of Genomics (CESAGen), and Dr Paul McCarthy, CESAGen's Research Council Academic Fellow in Health Care Resources in the Postgenome Era, are the UK partners in the EU-funded Biometric Identification Technology Ethics (BITE) project. Biometrics is the application of technologies that make use of a measurable, physical characteristic or personal behavioural trait to identify individuals for example facial and voice recognition. The BITE Project is a unique combination between academia, industry and

international organisations that aims to prompt research and launch a public debate on the ethics of biometric technology. BITE is co-ordinated by the Centre for Science, Society and Citizenship in Rome. Dr McCarthy has given papers at two BITE conferences, including one organised by the US Department of Homeland Security in Washington DC. Professor Chadwick is co-ordinating a bid for biometrics funding under the EU Seventh Framework Research Programme.

✦ <http://cesagen.lanacs.ac.uk>

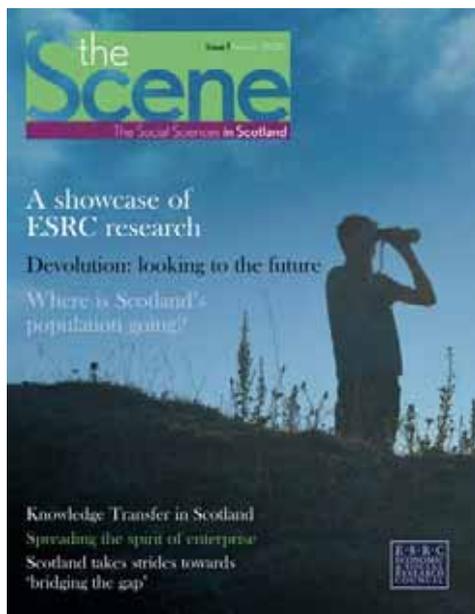
Collaboration with Regional Development Agencies

To boost knowledge transfer, the Office of Science and Technology has made increased funding available for two years to all Research Councils and Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) in England. In each RDA partnership the aim has been to contribute to regional economic growth by jointly appointing knowledge brokers or intermediaries whose role is to work with businesses to identify how their knowledge needs might be addressed by drawing on the social sciences. Each region has chosen slightly different priorities and different mechanisms to deliver agreed goals. In the North West, the knowledge transfer manager is based in the North West Development Agency and draws support from professionals in that organisation to carry out her brokering role. A similar arrangement has also been established in the East of England where the collaborating partner is i10, the consortium of universities in the region.

Science and maths

More than £2.4 million has been awarded to develop a targeted ESRC research programme on science and mathematics education. This funding follows a review of research in science and mathematics education by the ESRC's Teaching and Learning Research Programme. The initiative will focus on the challenge of ensuring that future generations have the mathematical and scientific skills required by the UK as a competitive knowledge-based economy.

✦ <http://www.tlrp.org>



The Scene: The Social Sciences in Scotland

Scotland's success has always been based on innovation, in every sphere from banking to engineering. And since the Enlightenment, Scots have known that improving our knowledge of society and the economy is as important as research in science and technology. ESRC-funded work provides insights into many topics that are vitally important to Scotland's future. In November of 2006, the ESRC published *The Scene* which showcased some of the wide portfolio of research that might have an

impact on the Scottish political agenda and make a contribution to the current debate. *The Scene* was launched at Our Dynamic Earth, in Edinburgh to a welcome by Diana Wilkinson, Chief Researcher at the Scottish Executive. Sir John Elvidge, Permanent Secretary, made the keynote address on the use of evidence in the policy cycle.

✦ www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk/thescene

New bilingualism centre

“Research will focus on the nature of the relationship between the two languages.”



The ESRC, Higher Education Funding Council for Wales and the Welsh Assembly Government will fund a new £5 million research centre to study bilingualism. Based at the University of Wales, Bangor, the new ESRC Centre for Research on Bilingualism aims to create greater understanding of bilingualism across the world. Research will focus on the nature of the relationship between the two languages of individual bilingual speakers as well as amongst the wider community. The centre also aims to influence public understanding of the nature of bilingualism and its social and psychological effects both in the UK and abroad. In addition, by examining language use in the classroom, the centre will also be of interest to school language teachers and other language professionals who will be able to draw on the findings to complement their teaching and enhance their understanding of bilingualism.

✦ <http://bilingualism.bangor.ac.uk>

Tax system review

The Mirrlees Review, launched by the Institute of Fiscal Studies (IFS), aims to offer specific proposals for the reform of the British tax system. The project was inspired by the 1978 *Meade Report*, a landmark in the study of tax design and perhaps the most influential output of the IFS to date. *The Mirrlees Review*, which aims to reflect the changing environment in which tax policy in the UK is currently conducted, will be published in 2008 to coincide with the 30th anniversary of the *Meade Report*.

The Review is chaired by Nobel Laureate Professor Sir James Mirrlees and a core editorial team, which also includes Tim Besley, Richard Blundell, Malcolm Gammie QC and James Poterba who will prepare a final report of long-term interest and relevance to policymakers, academics and civil society. The report will be aimed primarily at the UK but will also be relevant to other countries facing similar policy challenges. More than 50 IFS researchers and leading international experts will contribute chapters, commentaries and special studies on key themes of the research. The Review is jointly funded by the Nuffield Foundation and the ESRC.

✦ <http://www.ifs.org.uk/mirrleesreview>

Supporting World Class Social Science Research

As well as sustaining long-term commitment to existing research, an essential part of the ESRC's mission is to extend the boundaries of social science research and to reduce the constraints that stifle innovative and groundbreaking projects.

Through our Research Grants and Strategic Research Boards, we take two different approaches in the long-term support of, and commitment to, social science research:

- Responsive research schemes – providing opportunities to undertake new research that is often innovative and cutting edge and identified by an individual or research institution
- Directive research schemes – creating opportunities to commission new research focussing on specific topics and challenging issues that have been determined as strategic priority areas such as 'succeeding in the global economy', or 'energy, environment and climate change'.

Responsive research schemes

Through our responsive research schemes we provide a range of funding opportunities which provide us with the flexibility to seize new research opportunities and provide support to individual researchers at all stages of their career. These include our open date schemes and a number of annual competitions including the Professorial Fellowship, Research Seminar, First Grant and Large Grant. Funding is for single and multi-disciplinary projects, with an increasing number of applications at the interface of the social, natural and environmental sciences.

This has been an exciting year for the Research Grants Board, which is responsible for our responsive schemes. The first awards were made under our two new research-funding initiatives, the First Grants and the Large Grants schemes and the first cohort of Professorial Fellows are coming to conclusion. We believe that the introduction of these two schemes has further increased the flexibility of financial support awarded to researchers and research institutions and is an appropriate response to their respective needs.

First Grants Scheme

Starting out on a research career can be a daunting experience with only a few published papers to your name – especially when it comes to the competition for funding.

Inevitably, researchers and academics at the start of their career lack experience of managing and leading research projects. Obtaining funding for research at this stage can be problematic without a demonstrable record of past experience and success.

Our recently introduced First Grants Scheme provides a 'ring fenced' fund that is available exclusively for new researchers in all recognised research organisations.

Governing drug-related crime in the risk society

As a result of receiving his First Grants award, Dr Toby Seddon, based at the School of Law at the University of Manchester, is examining the principles and assumptions underpinning the Drug Interventions Programme. This is a major government initiative that aims to use the criminal justice system to identify drug-using offenders and channel them into drug treatment.

Dr Seddon's project began in January 2007 and will conclude in June 2009. Plans for the research include a documentary analysis and interviews with key national and regional policymakers. The project aims to contribute to existing knowledge about strategies for tackling drug-related crime, as well as extending understanding about the place of 'risk' in contemporary life.

Reflecting on the First Grants Scheme, Dr Seddon commented:

"Being awarded a First Grant has enabled me to really move forward my own research agenda and develop my research profile. It's meant I can pursue the 'bigger' intellectual questions I've been thinking about for a long time but never had the opportunity to explore properly."

Early upward trend

Research projects may be up to three years in duration and entail expenditure of up to £400k. During the first round of the scheme, we funded 28 research projects out of 151 applications. Following a streamlining of the eligibility criteria based on our first round experiences, we received 167 applications by the January 2007 closing date for the next round of awards. At the time of writing, the successful applicants had yet to be announced.

As an increase in the number of applications between rounds suggests, the First Grants Scheme is tapping into a vein of need in the research community. We are confident that the scheme will encourage innovative new projects and contribute to the vigour of social science research in the future.

Large Grants Scheme

Large-scale research projects that require funding for up to five years now have a new source of funding through the Large Grants Scheme. Successful projects are set to make a significant contribution to both the UK and global social science research base.





Commissioning of the first round of the Large Grants Scheme was completed in summer 2006. The Large Grants Scheme is a source of support for experienced researchers. It is intended for researchers who have an established record of national and international publications and who are recognised for the contribution they have made in their field of study. The types of project that this scheme aims to address are those that are beyond the usual scope of our standard grants and are in the range of £1.5 million to £5 million.

We received 23 applications and funded four that were considered of sufficient merit to warrant an award. Commissioning is now almost complete for the second round of the scheme and the Council hopes to be able to announce shortly the funding of a further three projects.

The four funded are:

Corporate governance, capital markets and performance

This project at the London Business School is seeking a better understanding of the comparative success of particular capital markets, such as those in the USA and UK, and their competitors. From a number of perspectives, the project is addressing several broad questions about the nature and magnitude of current corporate governance. The objective of the project is to improve the performance of UK capital markets and UK companies.

The waste of the world

Until now, social science understandings of waste have typically been nation-specific. This project at the University of Sheffield is taking a global approach to waste and is examining how places, people and materials are bound together through the movement, management and trade in waste. Comparative studies are being made of practices in the UK, India and Denmark. Findings are assisting decision-making about the appropriate actions required to address one of the most pressing economic, political and environmental issues of our time.

An examination of the impact of family socio-economic status on outcomes in late childhood and adolescence

This project brings together a cross-disciplinary team to gain a better understanding of: the link between parental socio-economic status; parental behaviours in early and mid-childhood; and adolescent outcomes and behaviours. By drawing on existing data of births in a given location and over a given time period, researchers are examining a wide range of outcomes, such as physical and mental health, risky behaviours and school performance. The research at the University of Bristol is providing a better understanding of late childhood and adolescence – key periods in young people's lives.

A social and political archive for Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland Social and Political Archive (ARK) is an existing resource, but is not an archive in the traditional sense in that it provides a variety of services to maximise the use and impact of social and political research. The ARK houses data on the internet on: 'the Troubles'; summaries of social policy research based on Northern Ireland; results of social surveys; and facts and figures on Northern Ireland elections. The ARK based at Queen's University Belfast and the University of Ulster works with local academics to help in the use of existing survey datasets and seeks to fill gaps in the research infrastructure. It also works with UK partners and international colleagues working in the areas of Irish Studies, conflict resolution, political science and religion.

The Large Grants Scheme is based on open competition and we apply no restrictions on the nature of the social science research to be undertaken, the research facility, or who may be the principal investigator (subject to the expectations of experience and profile already outlined). This freedom and flexibility is intended to encourage new and innovative research.

Professorial Fellowships

Professorial Fellowships provide the recipients with an opportunity to pursue their research interests with more independence than those offered by conventional funding mechanisms.

This year, the first cohort of the Professorial Fellowships, introduced in 2003, are coming to a successful conclusion. As follows, some of the UK's leading social scientists have been conducting research projects without the constraints and pressures of administrative and teaching responsibilities. There are additional benefits: the scheme enables new researchers to work on the projects too.

As a result of the opportunities that the scheme opens up, fellows have been evolving their own innovative and groundbreaking research agendas in a variety of social science areas by conducting research projects that last up to three years.

Investigating economic forecasting

One of the original nine Professorial Fellowships was awarded to Professor David Hendry of Nuffield College, part of the University of Oxford. During his fellowship, Professor Hendry carried out an investigation in to economic forecasting, with a particular focus on predictions that fail – and why.

The project came to an end recently and, following independent evaluation, Professor Hendry's investigation was commended as being research of 'outstanding' quality.

Supporting World Class Social Science Research



“The Professorial Fellowship invaluablely enabled a considerable reduction in my teaching and other duties. This allowed me to pursue my research on forecasting with renewed vigour, as well as increase my dissemination of the results both written and in presentations” said Professor Hendry.

The aims of the project were to:

- formalise a theory of economic forecasting applicable to economics that evolve over time and are subject to sudden shifts, eg crises
- derive from first principles ways to improve forecasting performance
- build on the findings, improve forecast performance in an evolving world and in particular, design forecasting devices that are robust to location shifts
- test the theory’s implications on various macro-economic data series – especially inflation.

Professor Hendry used the fundamental tools of econometric theory, statistical analysis and computer simulation to tackle the objectives of his research. It was agreed that the project delivered some surprising, yet practical, results that will benefit future economic forecasting.

Impact of Full Economic Costs

During the year, we have been monitoring the Full Economic Costs (fEC) funding arrangements that are now in place for grants. Following their introduction, there was a fall in grant applications, but we are pleased to note that these have now returned to pre-fEC levels. However, it is still early days to make long-term conclusions about the impact of fEC on demand and the cost of awards.

Directed Research

The ESRC, in its current *Strategic Plan*, has identified a number of key research challenges. Many of these have significance both for the UK and the wider international community and create new opportunities for ESRC-funded research. A significant proportion of the Council’s budget is spent on supporting large-scale investments such as centres, programmes, groups and networks in these identified priority areas and we currently have over 50 such investments. Many of these are interdisciplinary in nature and a large number are funded jointly with other research councils or other partner organisations.

The key research challenges are:

- Succeeding in the global economy
- Population change
- Energy, the environment and climate change
- Education for life
- Understanding individual behaviour
- Religion, ethnicity and society
- International relations and security

Competition for Research Centres and Groups

Research centres receive long-term investment and are usually located in a single institution. They are intended to be centres of excellence and must be committed to the achievement of key research outcomes of the highest international standards. This includes making an important contribution to the development of research capacity in the UK and in demonstrating a significant economic and social impact. Research Groups are selected via the same competition as centres but for an initial period of five years.

We hold regular competitions for the funding of new research centres and renewed funding for existing ones. Funding is substantial and usually for periods of up to ten years. In recent years, this has included an open element where applications are invited in any area of the ESRC’s remit and a steered element where applications are encouraged in areas that address our strategic priorities.

A step in the right direction

One of our new centres, which started work in October 2006, was the Social Technological and Environmental Pathways to Sustainability (STEPS) Centre. The centre is intended to tackle the challenge posed in how to combine environmental sustainability with better livelihoods and health for people in developing countries. It is also carrying out research to establish how science and technology can be harnessed in the interests of prosperity and social justice for the world’s poor.

The STEPS research centre is based at the Institute for Development Studies (IDS) and Science Technology Policy Research (SPRU) at the University of Sussex. It brings together two leading research institutes to create new networks and debates through the application of interactive and interdisciplinary research. In addition, it is building the capacity of a new generation of researchers, students and the users of research data. The work of the STEPS centre is helping position the UK centrally in a field that is rapidly expanding internationally.

Commenting on the ESRC funding award, Professor Melissa Leach the director of STEPS, said: “This funding is the culmination of many years of research at IDS around the issues of environment, health and development and at SPRU on science, technology and innovation. It will enable us to create a new hub for the national and international research and policy networks so badly needed in this area.”

Researchers at the STEPS centre are developing an interdisciplinary ‘pathways’ approach that is drawing together: development studies, studies of science, technology and innovation; and theories of complexity – across both the social and natural sciences. The pathways approach is helping to develop new concepts, methods and tools to inform policy and practices that make a vital impact on societies throughout the world.



Striking a balance

Striking an appropriate balance between responsive and directive approaches to the award of funds for research is an objective that we are always seeking to achieve. Without this, there is a risk that exciting leading-edge innovative research in some fields could be missed as they would not have fallen into one of our 'headline' priority areas. So, in recent years, our competition for new centres has provided support for proposals outside of the key challenges. Similarly, many of our responsive awards could be deemed to fall within the key challenges but were funded on the basis of their scientific quality.

Microdata

Recently, there have been a number of applications for new research centres that would not have been submitted if the competition had been too restrictive in terms of subject matter. An example of a successful responsive bid for new funding of a research centre in a field that had been determined by the applicants is – The Centre for Microdata Methods and Practice (CeMMAP) – a joint venture between the Institute for Fiscal Studies and University College London.

The centre is being supported for five years by an award of £3.1 million and is using microdata to understand human behaviour and inform policymaking. With an eye to the future, CeMMAP is also placing an emphasis on the education and training of new and existing researchers and users of microdata.

Tools are being developed and applied to extract information about how people behave in society from non-experimental data. To achieve this, researchers are recording the circumstances, actions and experiences of individuals, households, enterprises and other organisations that influence society. Findings will inform policy in areas such as, education choice, savings behaviour and housing decisions.

In its work, the centre faces considerable challenges. The processes in which individuals are engaged are complex and dynamic – involving risk and uncertainty. In addition, the outcomes of decisions made by individuals occur long after they have been made. By addressing such challenges, CeMMAP is building in the UK a major world presence in microdata research and training.

Research Programmes

Research Programmes are groups of projects addressing one or more of the ESRC's key challenges. Selection is based on open competition in response to a specification for the programme. Programmes are designed to address medium-term social and economic issues drawing on the skills and knowledge of a variety of disciplines.

This year we have agreed funding for a new £8.5 million research programme in conjunction with the Arts and Humanities Research

Council. The Religion and Society Programme is designed to create understanding of the role of religion in shaping our lives and wider society. During the year there have also been new waves of commissioning in existing programmes such as the ESRC's Rural Economy and Land Use programme where we agreed funding for ten new research projects. Six of these bring together teams of natural and social scientists to research the management of animal and plant diseases in the UK. They aim to find strategies for preventing and dealing with these problems and are considering a wide range of issues involved in outbreaks, including the effect of changes in the countryside, technological developments, increasing globalisation, and the part played by public perceptions and concerns.

Research Ventures

The Research Ventures fund was introduced in 2004, to be available for collaborative proposals which lie outside current ESRC funding modes. The ESRC Ventures Scheme offers the opportunity to collaborate with a range of partners willing to co-fund research programmes. During the year we have agreed Research Ventures with: the Hewlett Foundation on reproductive health; the Scottish Funding Council, Welsh Funding Council, Department for Employment and Learning in Northern Ireland and the Higher Education Funding Council for England on the impacts of higher education institutions on regional economies; and with the Medical Research Council, The Wellcome Trust and Cancer UK for the creation of up to five 'Centres of Excellence' designed to strengthen public health research in the UK.

The public health centres will bring together leading experts from a range of disciplines working in partnership with practitioners, policymakers and wider stakeholders in order to tackle complex public health issues, such as obesity and smoking that are likely to have a significant impact on the health of the nation. Each centre will receive up to £5 million over five years to build academic capacity by establishing a range of new academic posts and strong training and career development programmes.

Strengthening the Social Science Research Base: Data and Methods



As modern society changes at an ever increasing rate, researchers are being asked to answer increasingly complex questions, ranging from how to succeed in the global economy, to understanding patterns of demographic change, through to analysing and combating climate change. Such questions are international in their scope and global in their reach.

To respond to these questions researchers need to have access to the very best datasets and be equipped with the most advanced tools and techniques. We have invested heavily in developing UK data resources and new methodological tools and techniques but more needs to be done.

If the UK is to meet the research challenges of the 21st century, we need bigger and better datasets. Many of the UK's existing datasets were never designed to answer the questions they are being asked today. They lack the level of granularity which is now essential to address some of the most pressing scientific and policy questions.

Over the last year, the ESRC has been involved in a range of activities working towards developing a long-term strategy for improving and securing the UK's research infrastructure.

We aim to:

- Create a world leading data infrastructure that will allow researchers to address the key social and economic research challenges of the 21st century.
- Maximise easy and effective access to that infrastructure.
- Drive forward the development and uptake of cutting edge methodological tools and techniques to improve the creation, management and analysis of data resources.

- Promote the widespread exploitation of the data infrastructure across and beyond the social science community.
- Develop and promote access to the broader information resources that underpin top-quality social science research.

Delivering this strategy is a major challenge which cannot be met by us alone. The ESRC is increasingly seeking to work in strategic partnership with other key stakeholders both within and beyond the social science community with the aim of building a co-ordinated and coherent approach to developing the UK's national research infrastructure.

Working in partnership

By supporting the UK Data Forum the ESRC has played a key role in creating a more coherent national data infrastructure. The Forum brings together a range of organisations including the ESRC, the Medical Research Council and a number of government departments, with responsibilities for the development of data resources.

During the course of the year the Forum finalised the first version of the *National Strategy for Data Resources for Research in the Social Sciences*. The Strategy aims to provide a coherent framework for the development and maintenance of a robust data infrastructure, ensuring that relevant and timely data are available to inform and address future research priorities.

The Strategy identifies the data resources required over the next five to ten years to address key research issues such as the ageing population, migration, globalisation and child development. These challenges cut across the interests of all the stakeholders represented on the Forum.

A world class data infrastructure

The National Data Strategy met with early success, supporting the bid we made to the Office for Science and Innovation's Large Facilities Capital Fund to establish a

major new UK Household Longitudinal Study (UKHLS).

With a proposed sample size of 40,000 households this will be the largest study of its type in the world. The volume and level of data collected will provide opportunities to study and understand some of the most complex problems and issues facing society today. Successfully establishing the Study is one of the key priorities for the coming year.

To further develop the National Data Strategy the ESRC has been working with the UK Data Forum partners to improve access to a range of administrative, commercial and international data resources. During the year the Council conducted an audit to establish the scope, quality and potential that public sector administrative data can offer as research resources. While the audit highlighted the potential of administrative data to inform social scientific research it also noted the barriers which need to be removed in order to exploit that potential. Over the coming year we will establish an Administrative Data Service to work with government departments and agencies with the aim of trying to overcome these barriers in order to improve the use of administrative data for research purposes.

Maximising data access

The true value of top-quality data resources is lost if they cannot be effectively accessed by the research community. Data needs to be preserved and catalogued to leading international standards. Innovative ways need to be found to deliver data to the research community.

Following a major review, in 2006 the ESRC renewed the Economic and Social Data Service's (ESDS) funding for a further five years. The ESDS is a national data service that provides access and support for an extensive range of key economic and social data, both quantitative and qualitative, spanning a range of disciplines and themes. The review noted that the service plays a central role in



supporting and enabling high quality research and training in the social sciences. During the next phase of funding ESDS will continue to place a strong emphasis on providing access to a wide range of international datasets. It will also continue to develop 'added value services' to enhance access to and use of large and complex datasets, such as the new UKHLS.

Development of methodological tools and techniques

It is vital that the most advanced tools and techniques are available to the social science community to both collect and effectively analyse increasingly large and complex social science data resources. Such tools and techniques form an integral part of the UK's social science infrastructure.

To help maintain the UK's international reputation as a centre of excellence in methodological development the ESRC has invested in a new initiative on survey design and measurement. This initiative is looking at innovative ways to collect new data and to combat concerns over falling survey response rates. It is expected that the eventual findings will be harnessed to enhance data collection strategies under the UKHLS and other large and complex surveys supported by the ESRC.

Promoting the use of the social science data infrastructure

There needs to be a balance between sustained large scale investment in the UK social science infrastructure and the provision of resources to optimise its exploitation and use. In order to achieve this balance the ESRC must continue to develop the UK skills base in both qualitative and quantitative methods and ensure that new tools and techniques are effectively promoted and disseminated within the research community.

In the autumn of 2006 the ESRC announced a second call for proposals to its secondary data analysis initiative, Understanding Population Trends and Processes. The primary aim of the

initiative is to build capacity in secondary analysis, promoting the use of large-scale social science datasets. The second round was aimed at improving our understanding of demographic trends and processes which affect the population, society and the economy, with particular emphasis on ethnicity.

The ESRC's Research Methods Programme held its second highly successful Research Methods Festival, in July 2006. Around 1,000 social scientists attend the four day festival which hosted sessions on a broad spectrum of topics across the social science disciplines and across methodological boundaries. The festival also provides an opportunity for researchers to learn about new developments in methods as well as an opportunity to network and support new and early career researchers.

Going global

As the scale and importance of global issues increases, so does the demand for data to support high quality research on these issues. Under the auspices of the National Data Strategy we have made major strides in expanding the range of international resources available to the UK social science community.

ESDS International provides access and support for a range of international datasets. The ESRC has provided additional funding for ESDS International, in order to renew its existing data licence agreements with the International Monetary Fund, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, United Nations Industrial Development Organisation, the World Bank and the International Energy Agency.

The service promotes and facilitates both increased and more effective use of international datasets in research, learning and teaching across a range of disciplines.

The European Social Survey (ESS) charts the attitudes, beliefs and behaviour patterns in over 20 European Countries. We have been involved with the survey since its inception

and provided funding for the UK component of the third round of the survey which took place in 2006. The ESRC is keen to work with its European partners to ensure the long-term future of this Survey.

The need for access to high quality international data has led to nearly 30 countries to work together and establish an International Data Forum based on the model of the UK Data Forum. We are taking a leading role in organising its foundation conference which will take place in June 2007 in Beijing. The conference will take stock of the current data resources that facilitate national and cross-national research on issues of global importance.

To support the establishment of the International Data Forum and in order to increase social scientists' knowledge about data available in other countries, the ESRC funded four groups of social scientists to explore the scope of microdata in Brazil, China, India and South Africa. The reports note that in each of these countries organisations are working to increase access to their data, there are a number of language, co-ordination, confidentiality, legal and cultural barriers which need to be addressed in order to allow the international community to negotiate ways to effectively share microdata across national borders.

International Work: Maximising our International Presence



One of the key priorities of the ESRC over the next ten years is to operate increasingly in a global context this means we will be more involved in facilitating greater international collaborative funding, supporting more international comparative research, promoting greater use of international datasets and the development of international comparative methodology while benchmarking the quality of UK social science in an international context. The ESRC's strategic objective is to maximise our international presence and opportunities across the world.

Building international links

The ESRC's international strategy sets out to break down barriers to international researcher collaboration across the globe. To this end, two particularly important visits took place in 2006, the first to China and the second to India.

In April 2006 ESRC Director of Policy and Resources, Glyn Davies, spent eight days in Beijing. He was accompanied by former ESRC Associate Director for International Strategy, Chris Godwin, now Director of the Research Councils UK (RCUK) China Office, which will have its official launch in autumn 2007. They held discussions with the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and some of its institutes, economics, trade, sociology and law, and the Chinese Academy of Sciences (psychology, science and technology studies). They also visited a relatively new national scientific funding body in Beijing, the National Science Foundation of China, that is comparable to the UK Research Councils.

The objectives of the visit were two-fold, to find ways to make co-working between the two countries easier, and to consider particular areas where we might support joint workshops or collaborative research. Visiting China was a valuable experience that will help us to gain maximum benefit from the RCUK China office, and the visit has helped pave the way towards successful collaborative partnerships between UK and Chinese social scientists. Another large

step along this road will be the International Data Forum in Beijing in June 2007, organised by the ESRC's strategic advisor for data resources, Professor Peter Elias. The lasting impression held by the visitors to China is of the very genuine interest in greater collaboration displayed by their hosts.

Later in the year, similar openness and enthusiasm was encountered during a visit to Delhi in which Glyn Davies was joined by ESRC Council Member Professor Fiona Devine and ESRC Associate Director, Ros Rouse. The broad aim of this visit was to meet leading social scientists and funders of social science research in India to explore how best to build upon the existing strong collaborative activity between the two countries.

With the help of the British High Commission and the British Council in Delhi, meetings were arranged with the Indian Council for Social Science Research, the University Grants Commission and the Indian Medical Research Council. Other meetings included the Ford Foundation and the Department for International Development. The ESRC party also met with Abijit Sen, member of the influential Planning Committee of India. Contact was made with many individuals at important social science institution, including Jawaharlal Nehru and Jamia Millia Islamia Universities, the Centre for Developing Societies, the Institute for Economic Growth and the Delhi School of Economics.

Discussions were held with people from a range of disciplines, including economists, sociologists, political scientists, anthropologists and geographers. The ESRC's key challenges reflected very strongly with those of the Indian academics areas of importance. Issues of globalisation, global competitiveness, energy, the environment, health, education, inequality and poverty were absolutely central to the discussions, and several exciting new collaborative ventures are likely to arise as a result.

Through the insights gained during this visit, the ESRC International Advisory Committee is well placed to consider how best to strengthen collaboration between the UK and Indian Social Science communities.

Equipping UK social scientists for international research

Whether it examines global climate change, cross-border population flows or the impact of new economic powers such as China and India, social science research in the UK has an increasingly international dimension. The ESRC funds resources which provide the tools, training and access that enable UK social scientists to perform world class international research.



Through ESDS International all researchers affiliated to a UK higher or further education institution can access a wide range of international datasets through its free web-based service. Since its launch in 2003, over 11 thousand researchers from more than 170 UK institutions have accessed its extensive data portfolio, which is funded by the ESRC. The award winning European Social Survey informs a different perspective, charting attitudes, beliefs and behaviour patterns in over 20 European countries, and the annual International Social Survey Programme, which involves 40 countries worldwide is able to add a cross-national, cross-cultural perspective to individual national studies.

Gaining access to international data is not always easy. Even finding relevant research amongst the vast number of publications in the social sciences is a time consuming process. The International Bibliography of the Social Sciences aims to save researchers time by listing over two million articles, books and book chapters from around the world. The ESRC is also currently working with Eurostat (the statistical office of the European Communities) and the UK Data Forum to enhance the ability of UK researchers to make comparisons across countries and regions. On a larger scale, some 30 countries are currently working to establish an International Data Forum with the aim of improving access to high quality international data.

The ESRC is working to improve the skills of researchers to put these new data sources to good use. For example, we support five centres of excellence to train social scientists in the languages and cultures of China, Japan, the Arabic speaking world and Central and Eastern Europe, including parts of the former Soviet Union. An International Comparative Research Methods Initiative sets out to ensure UK researchers have access to an array of methods to meet the challenges of working internationally.

Ultimately, a better understanding of how different countries face common challenges can assist UK policymakers in addressing similar challenges more effectively.

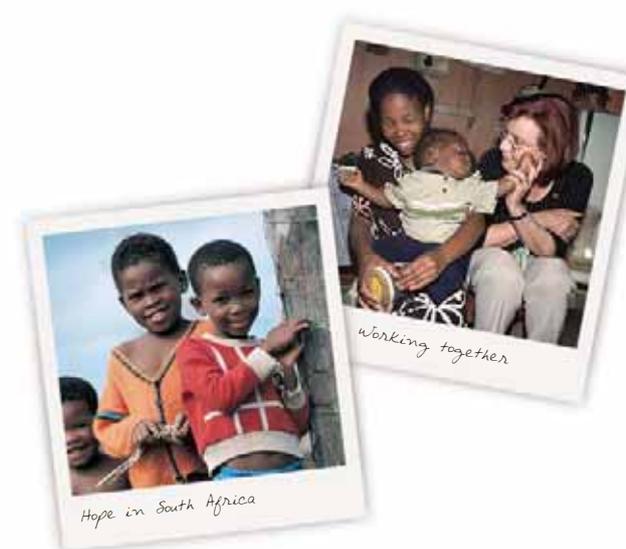
A joint approach to tackling poverty

More than a billion people worldwide still survive on less than a dollar a day, and 20,000 people die each day from preventable diseases. Anti-poverty campaigners tend to highlight lack of political and financial commitment from the richer parts of the world as key reasons for the slow progress in dealing with one of the most intractable problems of our time. Yet other, more subtle barriers arise from the fact that fighting poverty is an extremely complex business, and policy interventions can fail in their desired effect for a range of complex reasons.

It's here that social scientists believe they can help. Development policies grounded in sound research and analysis can potentially avoid the twin pitfalls of ineffectiveness and unintended consequences. Yet, to date, academics have often felt constrained in their choice of research subjects, partly because funding has typically been linked to the specific requirements of Western donors or multilateral international organisations.

To address some of these problems, the ESRC has entered into partnership with the Department for International Development to fund research projects linked to the poverty reduction agenda. This £13.5 million scheme is now in its second year and is open to international researchers. Research projects aim to use academic rigour to drive real impact on the poverty agenda. For example, one of the beneficiaries of the award scheme, Professor Ian Timaeus of the Centre for Population Studies at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, is working with academics in South Africa to examine the complex relationships, population and poverty dynamics and the AIDS epidemic.

A further new funding partnership between the ESRC and The Hewlett Foundation launches its first call for applications in 2007. With a budget of £2 million over four years, this scheme will examine ways in which population dynamics and reproductive health outcomes impact economic growth and poverty reduction.



Training: Strengthening our Future Capacity

Most of the work of the ESRC's Training and Development Board places an emphasis on the provision of a strong well skilled base for social science research in the UK.

The long-term health of the UK social science research base is confronted by a number of challenges, with some disciplines even facing heightened threats to their sustainability. To address the threats, the ESRC has implemented strategies in several discipline-specific priority areas with interventions that will reverse the trends and strengthen future research capacity.

Through our Training and Development Board, about one third of the ESRC's annual budget is allocated to training and development programmes for postgraduate students and postdoctoral fellowships. We also support skills development activities across the entire 'academic life course' through such activities as the Researcher Development Initiative. This includes refresher training courses and skills development for researchers at all stages of their career.

To gauge the scale of these activities, during the year, over 700 new studentships were funded and overall we have supported around 2,800 new and existing studentships. Over the last 12 months, the ESRC has funded close to 100 new postdoctoral fellowships.

What a studentship entails

Any studentship involves the preparation of a PhD thesis based on research – a substantial commitment in its own right. However, the purpose of the studentship is to further enhance an individual's research skills, knowledge and experience. The aim is for students to become highly effective, competent and professional researchers at the end of a three or four-year training period.

Following a studentship, individuals:

- are able to decide what research methods should be applied in different circumstances
- demonstrate a thorough understanding of the theoretical context in which their research is conducted
- are clear about the available background literature in their chosen field of research
- can present findings and theories effectively and in a precise manner to both academic and non-academic audiences.

To achieve these outcomes students follow accredited masters programmes that include generic outcome and discipline specific outcome requirements. The student's institution arranges recognised development programmes that meet guidelines set out by the ESRC.

An eye on the future

Our role is to look to the long-term future of social science research and maintain the 'health' of the research base. Therefore, we fund people starting out on their careers to ensure that in the coming decades there will be a viable body of researchers who have moved through the system with appropriate skills, experience and knowledge. To understand the needs, we reviewed the demographic profile of the social science research base to establish the causes of shortages in particular areas. Shortages caused by, for example, retirement trends outstripping the level of new recruitment.

The review and analysis of researcher demographics was carried out in 2005 and has helped us identify the particular shortage areas that have subsequently become the focus of ESRC funding. Seven of the 18 disciplines that we cover have emerged as vulnerable to changes.

These are:

- Economics
- Education
- Management and Business Studies
- Socio-Legal Studies
- Social Work
- Language-Based Area Studies
- Advanced Quantitative Methods.

A foot on the ladder

As part of the ongoing development of essential research and leadership skills and to help researchers obtain their first grant after their PhDs, we have introduced the First Grants scheme.

First Grants provide an opportunity for new career researchers to 'cut their teeth' through the management and leadership of their first project in a field of research that they have selected. These are not personal grants, such as the one-year grants awarded for studentships and fellowships, but are for original research projects of up to three years' duration.

In addition to leading a research project, the scheme offers a number of additional benefits:

- experience of preparing the initial case for the project as part of a grant application
- opportunity to formulate forward plans for a career in research
- experience of writing up the project and findings as the principal investigator
- significant contributing factor for the retention of new researchers.



Prioritising

In consequence of the review's findings, more studentships and fellowships have been channelled into these disciplines, principally through quota studentships. However, the capacity needs of the seven disciplines are not all the same; some require more studentships, while others require more fellowships; still others need more focus on research quality.

Economics: a more attractive proposition

The field of economics, one of the seven priority disciplines, provides an example of the strategy for alleviating research shortages. After qualifying, economics graduates who opt to complete a one-year masters degree are often attracted away from academia to take up appointments in the City or public sector. Paid employment is often chosen rather than progressing to PhD training, particularly under pressure to repay student loans. To address drop out rates, we have enhanced the stipend levels in Economics. These are now £3,000 above the standard level of £12,500, which we consider sufficient encouragement for retention. Although there remains a differential between stipend and first salary levels, this measure appears to be sufficient encouragement for retention of PhD students who are serious about following a research career. Despite the strategy having only been in place for a little over a year, tentative early evidence suggests that the measure is helping improve recruitment and retention. In Economics, nearly 80 per cent of students receiving ESRC support continued on to PhD training; an increase of 20 per cent on the previous year.

Quantitative methods: expanding the skills base

Beyond economics there is a need for more researchers who can exploit many of the major large scale datasets which inform research and policy analysis. To combat the current 'quantitative deficit', higher studentship stipends are now on offer alongside major training programmes aimed at deepening and refreshing the skills of mid-career researchers. We have also increased the number of fellowships available. Whilst these initiatives are only just beginning to gather momentum, the early signs are encouraging. For example there were double the number of applications for studentships in advanced quantitative methods this year, spread across a wide range of disciplines such as geography, politics and sociology.

Language-Based Area Studies: building interdisciplinary research capacity

Five new Language-Based Area Studies centres, funded by the ESRC the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) and the Higher Education Funding Council for England have recently been created. In all, over £20 million has been invested in establishing the centres to try to fill research shortages. The centres fund studentships, postdoctoral fellowships and mid-career programmes that focus on four countries and geographical areas, China, Japan, Eastern Europe and the Arab world.

Previously in the UK, research in these regions has been weak. It is, however, essential to have a better understanding of the countries and regions in view of the significant role each is playing on the global stage. The centres are intended to provide cultural, economic and

political understanding so that appropriate relationships are fostered, strategies are devised, and plans are developed in the interactions the UK has with the nations concerned.

Our emphasis on society, economy, politics, citizenship and human geography, complements the AHRC's concerns with the culture, history, language and religions of specific regions. With the AHRC, we are building new research capacity and providing training and development programmes in a hitherto poorly represented fields.

In addition to training and development, researchers need to understand the languages of the countries and regions that they are studying. This helps, for example, in reading documents or in conducting local research. In consequence, development programmes include extra tuition and exposure to the appropriate language(s).

The centres are based in universities and research institutions in the UK that have strong connections with specific countries and regions. Institutions work collaboratively with one another to ensure distinct research expertise is brought together for the collective good of the whole.

Training: Strengthening our Future Capacity

Spotlight on one of the collaborative partnerships

The Centre for East European Language-Based Area Studies is a consortium comprising the University College London School of Slavonic and East European Studies, Russian and East European Studies at the University of Oxford and the Centre for Russian and East European Studies, part of the European Research Institute, based at the University of Birmingham. The consortium also works closely with a network of partners, including the Universities of Bath, Cambridge, Kent, Manchester, Sheffield, Warwick and the School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London.

The centre is developing multi-disciplinary, language-based research capacity around key research themes. This is being achieved through the ESRC and AHRC area studies development programmes, workshops and conferences – as well as engagement with the user community and international networks.

By working together the universities are creating a sustainable flow of highly trained area specific expertise. The centre's vision is to set the UK research agenda for study of the region and inform policymaking – both nationally and internationally.

The long-term aim of the Centre for East European Language-Based Area Studies is to become the leading global presence in the study of Central and Eastern Europe.

Filling a gap

Potentially, there is a gap in researchers' careers between gaining a PhD and appointment to a first research post. Our postdoctoral fellowship award programme enables students to bid for an additional year's funding. This provides successful applicants with an opportunity to write up articles from PhD findings, undertake extra

research training, attend networking events, prepare funding applications and build a heightened profile. These activities are intended to enable fellows to find an academic post and join a research project team. By bridging the career gap, we believe we can stem the loss of social science researchers at a crucial point in their lives.

Shift in responsibilities

The introduction of quota studentships has led to increased local devolution as, institutions now recruit students directly, rather than the previous system that was centrally organised as an open competition involving large numbers of applicants. Responsibility for assessment and selection for awards no longer lies with the ESRC. Introduction of the localised selection process, conducted on a face-to-face basis, is a more efficient and effective mechanism for identifying appropriate candidates for awards and we anticipate that it will raise the standards of recruitment.

We have also increased the responsibility for pastoral care to academic institutions. Less reference has to be made to ESRC if amendments to the studentship or fellowship are sought and grant recipients refer directly to their own institution if they have queries.

This has eliminated the previous bureaucratic communication process as concerns and problems are now addressed locally between either the individual's supervisor or administrator. Responsibility for grant payment to students has also been devolved to the institution that makes allocations from an ESRC block grant.



As a result of the changes, from recruitment to submission of a thesis, students now link directly with their institution rather than the ESRC. This has given greater autonomy to institutions and has enabled the ESRC to concentrate its resources on strategies that will reduce future research shortages. While still sustaining and supporting other disciplined areas, the seven disciplines at risk identified by the 2005 review and analysis, have become the principal focus of our revised strategy.

Extending public sector studentships

As part of the ESRC's overall strategy for knowledge transfer, we have been working in collaboration with the public, private and voluntary sectors in plans to extend studentship schemes. During the year, we entered into new partnerships with the Department for Education and Skills and the Office for National Statistics. We also extended the scope of studentship schemes with the Department for Food and Rural Affairs, the Department for Transport, the Welsh Assembly and the Scottish Executive.

The impact of these plans and the resulting increase in studentships will begin to take effect from next year.

New opportunities

The Library of Congress Scholarship Scheme is run by the ESRC in conjunction with the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC). The scholarship is open to applications from doctoral students, postdoctoral fellows and research assistants funded by the AHRC and ESRC. It provides opportunities to access the internationally renowned research collections held at the American Library of Congress, in Washington DC.

Shanna Marrinan, one of the first people to be awarded a scholarship reflects on what the scholarship meant to her and her experiences.

"The title of my PhD is *Incorporating Gender Consciousness into HIV prevention education (sexual transmission) for Latin American immigrants to the UK*. The main aims are to explore how gender issues, Machismo and Marianismo, affect the risk of HIV transmission for this group, and the effectiveness of preventative education."

"Whilst very little is known about the rapidly growing Latin American community in the UK, in the US they form one of the largest ethnic minorities and US research reflects this presence. In fact, the Library of Congress has a dedicated Hispanic division. During my time at the Library, I focused on a number of main themes, so that my findings could be applied where appropriate to the Latin American population in the UK. Some of the areas I focused on included ethnic health disparities, changing gender roles in a broader context, self-perceived risk, and protective behaviours and discourses around homosexuality."

"Overall, I believe the study period was hugely beneficial for my research, providing me with unparalleled access to resources, and contacts with scholars and professionals with similar interests."



Science in Society

Social science has an important contribution to make in bridging the gulf of understanding that exists between science and a public which is increasingly intrigued by, but tends to be suspicious of, science. Our research offers many opportunities for engaging with and informing the public on subjects important to the economy and society in which we live, leading to a better understanding of the issues. We need to ensure that this research is communicated as widely as possible and has the maximum possible influence on policymakers, in government, business and on the general public.

To make ESRC research widely accessible we employ a variety of methods. We produce and promote corporate publications and events, and encourage our researchers to communicate more effectively through media training workshops and publication of a communications toolkit. We undertake publicity campaigns, hold a bi-annual open meeting, a festival of social sciences and public debates. In addition, we produce *The Edge*, a regular magazine highlighting our research to a general audience, run a monthly media campaign and have *ESRC Society Today*, a unique social science online resource.

ESRC Annual Debates

Choice in education was the topic under discussion in the three ESRC Annual Debates 2006 held in Belfast, Cardiff and London.

BBC Education Correspondent, Mike Baker, chaired the London event and asked the panel: is it possible to devise a choice system in education that does not advantage one group over another?

Melissa Benn, writer and journalist, responded that choice in education is merely selection by more murky means. Professor Stephen Bell, Karl

Mannheim Professor of Sociology at the Institute of Education, warned the audience that choice in

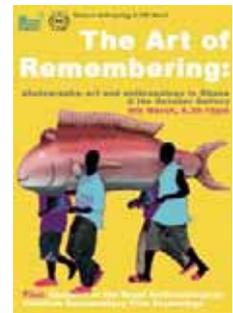
education is often a negative rather than positive choice, focusing on rejection, exclusivity and avoidance, with the obvious consequence of social segregation. Professor Simon Burgess, Director of the ESRC Centre for Market and Public Organisation, provided evidence of the impact of choice from an economic perspective explaining that it has only raised standards a little in the UK.

Do parents in fact want to choose their children's school? Professor Burgess replied that the evidence is clear: already in England, less than half of children attend their nearest school and in London that figure drops to 27 per cent. A random, lottery-based system may prove the fairest admissions system but, as audience and panellists agreed, however fair the system, there will always be someone willing to play it. A mixed audience of politicians, civil servants, teachers and parents held similarly stimulating debates on this topic in Cardiff and Belfast. Maria Eagle MP, Minister for Education, Northern Ireland Office, joined other speakers at the Belfast event including Professor Sir George Bain, Chair, Independent Review of Education, and Professor Alan Smith, University of Ulster.

Raising awareness of anthropology

The ESRC has agreed partial funding over three years to assist the Royal Anthropological Institute (RAI) in the development of its Educational Programme.

The aim of this partnership is to create a sustainable, long-term education programme in anthropology designed for pre-university students while supporting the ESRC's strategy of increasing engagement with schools and young people to raise awareness of social science. The RAI's Education Programme will develop a new school curriculum and raise awareness of anthropology as a social science subject, using events such as the ESRC Festival of Social Science to reach a wider audience.



Royal Anthropological Society, 'The Art of Remembering: photography, art and anthropology'. Katy Merritt.

Crisis debate

Are you concerned that a bird flu pandemic is just around the corner? Do you trust what the Government tells you on high profile health issues such as the safety of the MMR injection? Did you feel fully informed during the foot and mouth outbreak? These were some of the topical questions explored at the ESRC debate held during the British Association for the Advancement of Science Festival in September 2006. Experts examined some of the topical scientific issues which hit the headlines and discussed how the media, scientists and policymakers deal with them. Speakers included Dr Ian Gibson

MP, Norwich North, former Chair, Science and Technology Select Committee, Mike Grannatt, former Director General of the Government Information and Communication Service and Brigitte Nerlich, Research Fellow, Institute for the Study of Genetics, Biorisks and Society, University of Nottingham.



Maria Eagle

Michael Young Prize

July 2006 saw the first Michael Young Prize awarded to Dr Diana Burman for research that helped her to develop a highly successful method to teach profoundly deaf children English literacy. The method uses morphemes, the smallest units in English grammar, to teach spelling of English words. The Michael Young Prize was devised by the ESRC and Young Foundation to encourage and reward early career researchers whose work offers genuine new insights and is likely to have a policy or practice application beyond the academic community. The winner receives £5,000 to help disseminate their work. There are two runners up prizes worth £500 each. Diana Burman's research has generated much interest and in the last year she has talked about her research on BBC Radio 4's *Woman's Hour* and contributed to conferences in the UK and abroad.



in the media as an accurate representation of the majority of young people today. Each debate, chaired by a student union president, included guest speakers from the local police force, an ESRC-funded social science researcher and a local youth worker. Schools offered a very positive response with over 100 students attending each event. Questions and comments from the young people were well articulated and demonstrated that they were both aware of, and concerned about, not only their portrayal in the media but the state of local political affairs.

The ESRC provided student 'fact' sheets and teacher resource sheets offering statistics and information based on both government publications and ESRC-funded research into youth. A short video of each event will be made available on our website *Society Today* for downloading.

ESRC Festival of Social Science

Now in its fifth year the ESRC Festival of Social Science (formerly known as Social Science Week) is steadily increasing in popularity.



The Festival now takes place in March to coincide with National Science and Engineering Week and this year featured more than 70 ESRC-funded events, 70 per cent of which were located outside London including events in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Events

ranged from conferences to workshops and debates, exhibitions, film screenings, plays, policy briefings and much more. The Festival offers free activities for everyone from politicians to the general public with the aim of illustrating to all the diversity of the social sciences and how social science research makes a difference to everyone's lives. The launch of the Festival in London included guest speaker Malcolm Wicks MP, Minister of State for Science and Innovation and also showcased the new ESRC publication, *Britain Today*.

Visualising social identity and action

Researchers from the ESRC Identities and Social Action research programme are working with photographer Chris Clunn to explore and reflect on what it means to research social identities and action in the early 21st century. Seven projects led by Dr Tim Strangleman, Dr Ben Rogaly and Dr Becky Taylor, Professor Jane Wills, Dr Deborah Sporton and Professor Gill Valentine, Professor Rachel Thomson and Dr Mary Jane Kehily, Dr Dominic Bryan and Professor Joanne Hughes are involved in this initiative. Chris Clunn has been embedded within these project teams and has photographed subjects as varied as council estates in Norwich, redundant steel workers in South Wales and communities in Northern Ireland.



<http://www.identities.org.uk>

Young people ask the questions

Three different locations in the UK – Glasgow, Newcastle and Brighton – hosted the second annual A-level/ Higher debates held during the ESRC Festival of Social Science. These events offered young people the opportunity to debate how far they view their portrayal



'Youth - a waste of space?'
St James Park, Newcastle.

Knowledge Transfer

In the past few years the focus of utilising the output of ESRC-funded research has changed from dissemination to application, utilisation, knowledge transfer and impact generation.

Knowledge transfer's highlights in the year have included the introduction of new schemes and greater achievements with existing schemes especially increasing the percentage of Knowledge Transfer Partnerships based in business settings.

Using knowledge brokers, the ESRC has increased its engagement with business, forming partnerships with four Regional Development Agencies, to better identify regional business needs.

The ESRC continued to develop its partnerships with central Government departments and devolved administrations. Topical policy issues were addressed in 15 policy seminars, and we published *The Scene*, a magazine showcasing social sciences in Scotland.

Knowledge transfer: through people

Collaborations between researchers, businesses, the public sector and voluntary organisations on projects of mutual interest are one of the most effective mechanisms for knowledge transfer.

Development of the 'knowledge economy' in the UK is recognised as the means for securing competitive advantage that, in turn, contributes to the social and economic wellbeing of the nation. Interdependence between knowledge and practice is a necessity if a knowledge economy is to function effectively, and it involves a process of knowledge translation, transformation and engagement.

Through networking and by acting as brokers, we have increased the scope of collaboration during the year in order to build strategic research alliances with a range of organisations. Our activities have provided opportunities for individual researchers, universities and research centres to collaborate directly with stakeholders across all sectors in projects that relate to their particular interests.

Schemes involve researchers working directly with organisations over extended periods and also dissemination of research findings through workshops, conferences and other networking events.

These include:

- Placement Fellowship Scheme
- Collaborative Awards in Science and Engineering
- Shell Step programme
- Knowledge Transfer Partnerships
- Impact Grants Scheme



Placement Fellows Scheme

Launched in February 2006, the Placement Fellows Scheme

has provided researchers with an opportunity to work closely with a host organisation for three to 12 months on projects that have been jointly agreed by all parties. Following the success of collaborations with public bodies the scheme has been extended into the business-world.

During the year and in two rounds, seven government departments hosted Fellows including: the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit (PMSU); the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra); the Office for the First Minister in Northern Ireland; the Home Office; the Audit Commission; the Department for Trade and Industry; and the Department for Work and Pensions.

In all, 11 fellows have taken up placements and a variety of projects have been undertaken. For example:

- Dr Dirk Haubrich of the University of Oxford joined the PMSU to investigate local authority performance assessment and to identify potential improvements in the reliability, validity and usability of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment framework.
- Dr David Pevalin of the University of Essex took up a placement with the Home Office exploring drivers of confidence in the Criminal Justice System within specific segments of the population.
- Three fellows at Defra are investigating issues ranging from good practice in public engagement, to the department's approach to evidence-based policy.

Collaborative Awards in Science and Engineering

One of the largest of the ESRC's knowledge transfer programmes; the Collaborative Awards in Science and Engineering (CASE) Studentship scheme encourages interaction between academia and public, private and voluntary organisations. While undertaking their doctorates, award winners gain from the experience of carrying out collaborative research projects outside an academic environment. Financial support from the ESRC and the collaborating organisation is provided for the PhD students.

During the year, 67 per cent of CASE studentships took place in the public sector, 12 per cent in the private sector and 21 per cent in the voluntary sector. The ongoing objective now is to raise the level of future CASE Studentships with business to 25 per cent of the overall awards total.

Joint ESRC and departmental collaborative studentships

This scheme encourages interaction between academia and the public sector through the successful completion of a collaborative studentship. Host departments in 2006-07 included Department for Transport; Department for Work and Pensions; Welsh Assembly Government; Scottish Executive; and Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

Studentships are jointly supervised by the academic institution and host department and provide the student with the opportunity to undertake policy relevant research, to develop research capacity and provide high quality research-based evidence for the host department.

Topic areas are wide ranging and look at issues as varied as urban intensification and car-free living; environmental attitudes and behavioural change; and a study of older people living in rural areas.

Shell Step Placement scheme

Shell Step is a well established national student placement scheme that has been shown to give substantial benefits to small to medium size enterprises (SMEs). It provides small businesses with access to high-calibre undergraduates who work on key development projects. Placements usually take place during the summer prior to a student entering his or her final year at university.

Since its inception in 1986, over 20,000 placements have been completed and the Lambert Review of collaborative activity between businesses and universities promoted Shell Step as an exemplar of good practice.

During the year, the ESRC established a pilot scheme with the Shell Step initiative. Ten social science undergraduates were sponsored and undertook eight-week placements with SMEs from two diverse regions: Yorkshire and Humberside and the East of England.

Maximising the benefits of IT

Hayley Nash, a second year psychology student from the University of Northumbria, joined Space Lettings for her Shell Step placement. The aim of the placement was to maximise the business benefits of a new, sophisticated database called 'WinMan' to generate property lists, press advertisements, window cards and customised letters such as reference requests.

The placement has given Hayley a valuable insight into business and confidence in her abilities to plan, implement and complete a task on schedule. Space Lettings saved time on general administration, putting relevant information at the fingertips of all the staff. Haley has now been recruited for the rest of the summer.



Knowledge Transfer

Knowledge Transfer Partnerships

The Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP) scheme is a major initiative that ESRC funds as part of our commitment to knowledge transfer. The scheme's mission is to strengthen the competitiveness and wealth creation of the UK by enabling research organisations to apply their knowledge to the challenges faced by business. During the year we have been supporting 44 new and existing KTPs, the majority of which last for two years.

At the heart of each KTP is a relationship between a partnering organisation, or business, and staff in a knowledge base institution who apply their expertise to a project that is central to the development of the partner. Projects are carried out by KTP Associates recent graduates or postgraduates, who also benefit from organised training programmes.

KTPs are managed by a contracted company, Momenta, and the majority of the funding for the KTP scheme, is from the Department for Trade and Industry, although the ESRC is also one of the main contributors. Other funders include Invest NI, the Welsh Assembly Government, the Scottish Executive and other Research Councils. In addition to the grant, the participating partner also contributes financially to each project. During the year, we contributed £1.1 million to the scheme and 31 new KTP Associates were appointed.

Enhancing bus driving standards and embedding a culture of safety

Arriva Passenger Services Limited has been working in partnership with Cranfield University in a nine-year KTP employing three research associates, each for three years.

The aim of the research programme has been to reduce accident rates by designing a psychometric test for driver accident risk assessment profiling, designing a bus driving simulator for training novice drivers, and to deliver new training and recruitment practices that would have an impact on organisational culture.

So far, a prototype bus driving simulator has been developed for training purposes that is the first of its kind in the UK and there has been over £1million reduction in insurance claim costs as the accident rate has fallen.

Commenting on the project, Dr Lisa Dorn, based in the School of Engineering at Cranfield University said, "The KTP has benefited the university's research by facilitating a programme of activity in an up till now little understood field. A niche research portfolio has been developed that is unprecedented in the UK and we have also set up the Driving Research Group. In addition, the project has provided the basis of ongoing research with other driver groups. This has led to two major commercial contracts using a similar approach to that refined during the KTP."

In the early stages of the project, Arriva and Cranfield were awarded the International Prince Michael Award for Road Safety in recognition of their work to improve safety and driving standards.

Impacts Grant Scheme

Launched as a pilot in February 2006, our Impacts Grants are designed to enable award holders to generate new activity that has a high level of user engagement and collect new evidence that demonstrates the impact of their research. The scheme is intended to highlight the importance of creating an



impact for the research investments made by the ESRC and to draw attention to new and existing web-based resources. Depending on the scale and staffing needs of the intended impact activity, two categories of awards are made: up to £10 thousand and up to £50 thousand.

In the pilot round, nine grant applications were received and seven were awarded. In the second round in early autumn 2006, just under half the submissions were funded. Currently, in the third round of grants, 22 applications are being assessed.

The World Bank doctoral research and policy engagement consultation

The Centre for the Study of Globalisation and Regionalisation at the University of Warwick carried out a five-month dissemination programme about the outcomes of research concerning the activities of the World Bank.

Research involved direct contact with the World Bank and major policy networks with bank connections.

Jean-Christophe Bas, Development Policy Dialogue Manager of the World Bank, based in Paris said, "The World Bank is eager to explore and review constantly what policy and projects work, what doesn't and why, and what we are not sure about. This project provides us with a unique opportunity to hear the conclusions of students and researchers on critical linkages and challenges related to development and to the work of the World Bank."

Public affairs activities

We are the sponsors of the Parliamentary All-Party Group on 'Social Science and Policy' during the year have held six briefings for MPs and members of the House of Lords. The briefings are intended for those with an

interest in particular policy areas, such as: 'Britain's national security: Is Trident our only option?'; 'Deportations and removals'; 'Nuclear waste disposal' and also in the energy field, 'What happens when the lights go out?'

We have also published the first in a series of *Parliamentary Briefing Notes* on issues of current and topical interests, including ageing and public services.

Networking opportunities

The ESRC and the researchers that we fund regularly engage with a wide range of organisations, such as the Confederation of British Industry, National Council for Voluntary Organisations and Regional Development Agencies. In conjunction with many of these organisations, we have arranged briefings, consultations, events, meetings, workshops, presentations and seminars. We also offer membership schemes for individuals who have an interest in social science research and fund networking programmes that are designed to focus on the wealth of research taking place throughout the UK.



Making Headlines 2006-07

During 2006-07 the Council ran 16 media training courses, enabling 236 researchers ranging from PhD students, researchers working in ESRC's programmes and centres through to senior academics, to develop the skills to communicate professionally with the numerous media outlets available to disseminate research to business, policymakers and the general public. During the year, the ESRC also undertook a review of the media training the Council offers to ensure that going forward we are able to provide a range of courses supporting researchers at every stage of their career from early career researchers through to Professorial fellows.

"The ESRC 'Senior Researchers' training and 'Project Team' training have been of enormous importance to me, providing invaluable preparation for an unexpected and intense period of media coverage of our project. Armed with the skills provided by the media training, and backed up by the continuous support of the ESRC's Communications team, I felt well prepared to take control of interview situations and shape both the content and delivery of interviews in a wide range of contexts. These ranged from Brazilian, Polish and English TV and Canadian, Colombian, New Zealand, and Austrian radio, and perhaps the greatest challenge of all: John Humphries on the *Today programme*, to interviews for national and local newspapers. The excellent training in interview skills and press release preparation, through practice combined with expert feedback, also made us all feel well prepared to respond to hard-hitting inquiries from sources beyond the media: an additional bonus when researching a sensitive topic. In addition, the Project Team training played an important part in the process of consolidating a research team which is working across three universities in 15 research sites, allowing for the development of shared understandings at a crucial early stage in the project."

Elizabeth Atkinson, Principal Investigator, 'No Outsiders: Researching approaches to sexualities equality in primary schools'.

THE OBSERVER

Researchers on the 'No outsiders' project are working with a team of primary school teachers to develop ideas and resources to address lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender equality in their own schools and their communities.

The prince married a man, and lived happily ever after

Religious groups attack circulation of books raising gay issues among primary school pupils

by Anushka Asthana

Education Correspondent

A PILOT SCHEME introducing books dealing with gay issues to children from the ages of four to 11 has just been launched in England's schools.

It is being argued that the books, one of which is a fairytale featuring a prince who turns down three princesses before falling in love and marrying a man, are necessary to make homosexuality seem normal to children. Fourteen schools and one local authority, backed by teaching unions and a government-funded organisation, are running the controversial scheme, which has been attacked by Christian groups.

Twenty years ago the publication of *Jenny Lives With Eric And Martin* for use in schools led to an angry public debate. In response the government passed Section 28, an amendment to the Local Government Act 1988, that prevented local authorities and, by extension, schools from "promoting homosexuality" or its acceptability as a "pretended family rela-



argued that leaving images of gay relationships out of children's books was 'silencing a social message', and could end up with children being bullied later in

THE TIMES

Research by Professor Trevor Bennett and Professor Fiona Brookman, at the University of Glamorgan was much quoted in the media in connection with the verdict in the trial of the two killers of Tom ap Rhys Pryce. The research found that street robbers often carry out their vicious attacks for kicks.

John ap Rhys Pryce My son's murder shows there is much work to be done



Why did these two kill?

The judge said in his summing up that our son, Tom, "was in the wrong place at just the wrong time". That is one of the things that makes it so hard to accept his death. Had he left the Tube station a little bit earlier, or a little bit later, he would still be with us. The possible "ifs and buts" are endless. This is also what I feel when I start to consider what makes young men in Britain want to attack and kill innocent people like Tom. Countless words have been written about his murderers, Donnel Carty and Delano Brown, but I still cannot begin to understand their world. There the violence they used was so commonplace that just after they had



THE HERALD

The ESRC's Genomics Policy and Research Forum provided an opportunity for experts to discuss ways to tackle the threat of bioterrorism.

Experts meet to counter the next big threat: bioterrorism

JAMES MORGAN
j.morgan@theherald.co.uk

THE threat of bioterrorism is growing and new measures are urgently needed to prevent attacks, a conference in Edinburgh was told yesterday. A group of international biosecurity specialists met to discuss ways to prevent terrorists mis-using biological and medical research. Their aim was to identify potential bioterrorists and begin taking preventative action.

work for new international standards in biosecurity. Dr Ronald Atlas, a US bioterrorism expert from the University of Louisville, said: "When it comes to weapons of mass destruction, studies have shown that some biological weapons could equal or even exceed the damage caused by a nuclear weapon. And they are much more likely to be acquired by terrorists. "Anthrax is the proven agent, but focusing on anthrax means we should consider. An Inj...

FINANCIAL TIMES

The Advanced Institute of Management Research deputy director Andy Neely commenting on performance analysis and management.

The search for meaningful measures of performance

Effective performance measurement is notoriously difficult to get right, but many organisations view such frameworks as an essential tool for assessing the obligations of individual employees

Managers across the world, in both the public and private sectors are grappling with the challenge of performance measurement. For many organisations, the performance measurement process is a key pillar for establishing the obligations of individual employees. An illustration of how per...



THE DAILY TELEGRAPH

The ESRC's former Chairman, Frances Cairncross speaking at the British Association Festival in September 2006.

Kyoto isn't working, prepare for climate change, say scientists

Reports by Roger Highfield Science Editor

THE KYOTO agreement to cut greenhouse emissions is

mitigation, and that is a mistake," says Miss Cairncross. "We need to think now about policies that prepare for a hot, drier world."

the bottom line is that, "with present technologies, no combination of existing energy sources can conceivably bring about the reductions in energy use that we need, or at least,

The Guardian

A study carried out by the Institute for Social and Economic Research found that forcing teenagers to stay on in school until the end of the summer term, rather than allowing them to leave once they turned 16 increased the likelihood they would stay on in full-time education by 12 per cent.

School or training plan for all under-18s

Green paper to propose curbs on early leavers
Figures show 13% of 16-18s not in work or studying

Lucy Ward Social Affairs correspondent

Moves to compel teenagers to stay in school or training until 18 have been set in train by the government, the Guardian has learned. Alan Johnson, the education and skills secretary, a strong supporter of

1974 Year when the school leaving age rose from 15 to 16. Tony Blair's government later ended the right to leave at Easter

into training, study for a new diploma or take a job with training and a qualification attached. Mr Johnson has been inspired by reforms in Ontario, Canada, where children



THE OBSERVER

The New Dynamics of Ageing Programme.

£20m to help baby boomers grow older gracefully

Researchers launch project to fight health and social problems as a generation heads for 65

by Arnelia Hill Culture and Society Correspondent

THE BIGGEST ever research project to find ways to improve the lives and health of Britain's ageing population

progress and those of British society can be transformed," said Professor Alan Walker, director of the New Dynamics of Ageing Programme (NDAP), which will be launched tomorrow in partnership with the UK Funding Forum for Research on Ageing and Older People.



TWOADULTS

- Who are they? Teenagers crossing into young adulthood, aged from 16 to 25.
- Examples: Peaches Geldof (actress), Jack Osbourne, Charlotte Church
- What they like: iPods, MySpace, high-speed surfing, alcohol, glamour
- And the future? Multiple careers, flexible working, children in their forties.

THIRTYSOMETHINGS

- Who are they? The children of Thatcher, now in their late thirties and edging into their early forties.
- Examples: David Mills and Catherine...

between 1946, all-growing age group 42. Mark Helen Mirren and Susan Sarandon. King (opening the... (backpacking to five-star hotels) - (un)commented by children or debt

ESRC Society Today

esrc | societytoday

Many of the challenges facing us in the 21st century are social science issues, across a global landscape in which the distinctions between knowledge, information and data are becoming increasingly blurred.

ESRC Society Today brings together a range of content and resources to allow social scientists and the people who rely on their research, to better map the information environment in the social sciences and allow them to track and find the information they need.

Giving Social Science a Voice

The impact of economics and the social sciences, on today's society as a whole, is often taken for granted. The *ESRC Society Today* service, launched in May 2005, represents a prominent public vehicle for the ESRC to communicate its ongoing commitment to promoting excellence in social science research. It allows ESRC to demonstrate just how this excellence contributes to today's society, thereby giving social science a voice and providing a first port of call for anyone interested in the UK's society and economy.

ESRC Society Today is only one channel in the overall ESRC marketing mix and not a stand-alone initiative, or simply another publication output by the ESRC communications team; it embodies the efforts of a very wide range of actors, from ESRC-funded researchers and major investments, government departments, journalists, other funding bodies and third parties and, of course, ESRC staff.

Highest quality of social science research

The ESRC portal pulls together a number of different content strands to provide users with the most relevant format and level of information for their specific needs.

In addition to an awards and outputs database containing in excess of 9,000 awards and more than ten times that number of outputs (around 100,000 records), the service also provides an aggregate view of non-ESRC funded content, from a variety of high quality social science sources. These include academic institutions, publishers, funding organisations and government researchers.

We specifically commission non-technical summaries of research, news articles, interviews and opinion pieces from prominent journalists to humanise and contextualise what is happening at the cutting edge of research for the broadest possible audience, whilst maintaining the underlying scientific value of the investment.

Popular sections, such as the 'Facts and Figures', continue to evolve, providing snapshots of the current state of play across a range of subjects both in the UK and internationally.

Engagement with users of social science

Since its launch, the site has provided award holders with easier access to update their own information, allowing them to directly promote the outcomes of their work. User and community feedback continuously forms the development schedule for the service.

The last year has enabled us to incorporate substantial enhancements to the way in which the powerful search technology behind the site works, seen the service embrace the world of Open Access, and introduced audience specific channels to contextually encourage uptake of ESRC research output and impact based on different stakeholder groups.

Over the next year we will develop more content services aimed directly at key communities such as business in order to support ESRC knowledge transfer and economic impact strategies.

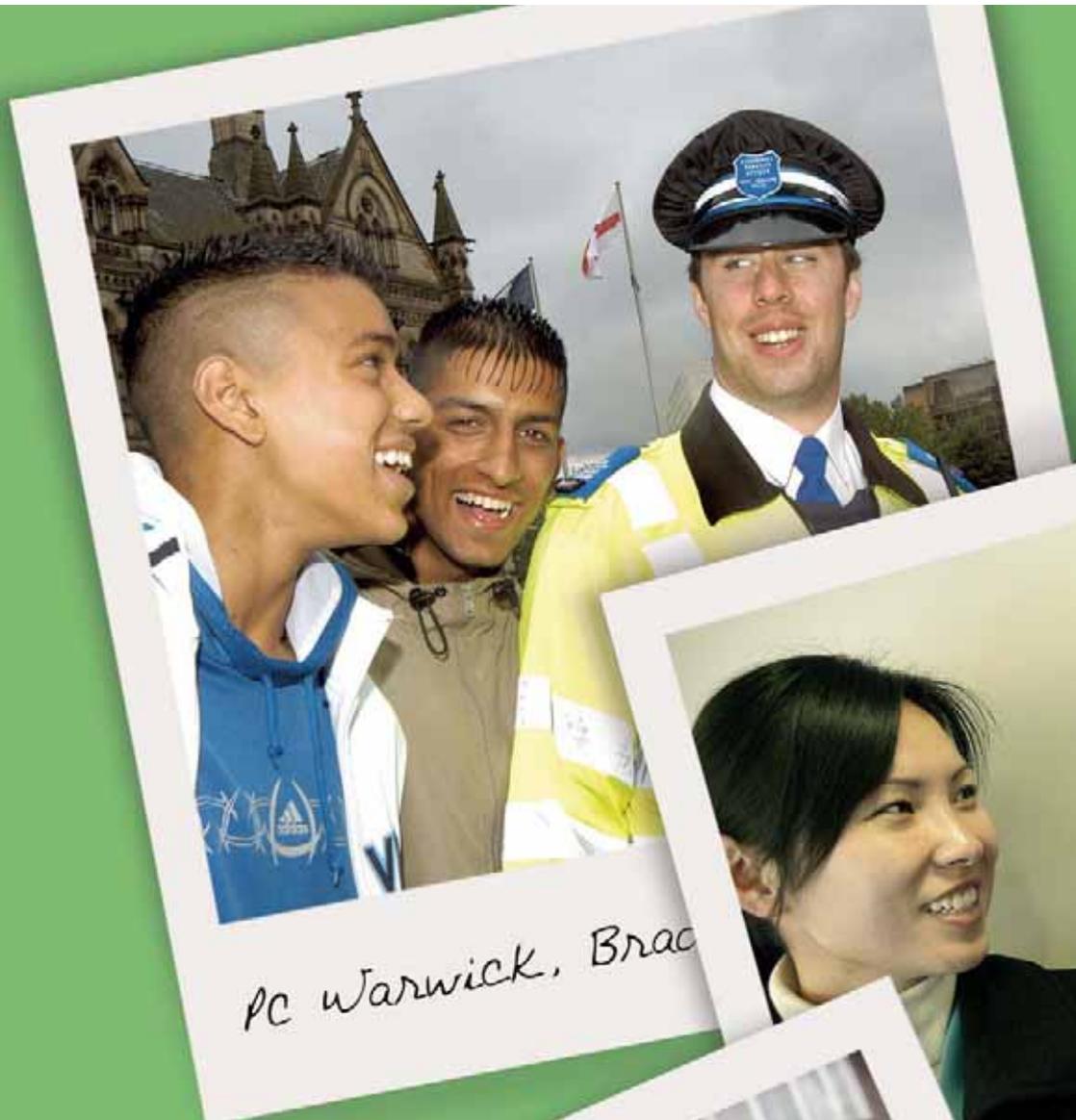
Working with partners across higher education we will aim to improve in-depth links and ensure access to important data and research resources that serve the sector. We will build on our own repository of social science, our awards and outputs, to improve accessibility of the individual research projects and overall increase the prominence of ESRC funded research, thereby supporting the key research challenges.

Dissemination of knowledge from the social sciences

In its first year the website received approximately 1.5 million visits from three quarters of a million people, serving over 40 million pages of content. In its second year, visits numbered 3.5 million, from 1.6 million users, to 70 million pages of content. All in all, this represents a substantially greater increase than had been projected and indicates that the service is growing from strength to strength.



Visit our website at:
<http://www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk>



PC Warwick, Braac



and Albert, Warrin



Vital Statistics

Who's Who at the ESRC

Research

Data and Methods

International

Training

Knowledge Transfer

ESRC Society Toady

Expenditure

Vital Statistics: Who's Who at the ESRC

Council, Boards, Committees and Staff

Members of Council 2006-07

The following Council Members were appointed by the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry and serve for terms of two to six years, the dates given show their term of appointment.



Ms Frances Cairncross
Chairman
Economic and Social
Research Council
2001-March 2007



Professor Ian Diamond
Chief Executive
Economic and Social
Research Council
2003-2010



Professor Alan Alexander
Chair
Postwatch Scotland
2003-2008



Ms Helen Dent
Chief Executive
Family Welfare
Association
2003-July 2007



Professor Fiona Devine
Professor and Head
of Sociology
University of Manchester
2003-July 2007



Professor Charlie Jeffery
Professor of Politics
University of
Edinburgh
2005-2008



Mr Paul Johnson
Director
Public Services
HM Treasury
2002-2008



Professor Michael Lamb
Head of Department of
Social and Developmental
Psychology
University of Cambridge
2006-2009



Professor Andrew
Pettigrew
Dean
University of Bath
School of Management
2004-2008



Professor Carol Propper
Professor of Economics
of Public Policy
University of Bristol
2005-2008



Professor Judith Rees
Professor of
Environmental and
Resources Management
London School of
Economics
2004-July 2007



Professor Alison Richard
Vice-Chancellor
University of
Cambridge
2004-July 2007



Lord Adair Turner
Non-Executive Director
Standard Chartered
2003-2009



Mr David Walker
Editor
The Guardian's
Public magazine
2007-2009



Mr John Neilson
Representative of the
Secretary of State for
Trade and Industry
Office of Science and
Innovation

Vital Statistics: Research Research Centres and Groups

Research centres are major investments in one or more of the ESRC's key challenges. They are funded for an initial period of ten years, subject to a satisfactory mid-term review.

Selection is based on a competition steered towards one or more of the themes, with peer and merit review processes involved. Research groups are selected via the same competition as centres but for an initial period of five years. The Strategic Research Board recommends awards for new centres and groups across the social sciences.

Research centres and groups 2006-07

Investment Name	Director	Telephone & Email	Dates	Current Grant	Website
Centre for the Analysis of Risk and Regulation (CARR)	Professor B Hutter	020 7955 7287 b.m.hutter@lse.ac.uk	October 2000 – September 2010	£2.8 million	http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/CARR
Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion (CASE)	Professor J Hills	020 7755 7419 j.hills@lse.ac.uk	October 1997 – December 2007	£2.7 million	http://sticerd.lse.ac.uk/case
Centre for Business Relationships, Accountability, Sustainability and Society (BRASS)	Professor K Peattie	029 2087 6562 peattie@cardiff.ac.uk	October 2001 – September 2011	£4.8 million	http://www.brass.cf.ac.uk
Centre for Competition Policy (CCP)	Professor C Waddams	0160 359 3715 c.waddams@uea.ac.uk	September 2004 – August 2009	£3.1 million	http://www.ccp.uea.ac.uk
Deafness, Cognition and Language Centre (DCAL)	Professor B Woll	020 7679 8670 b.woll@ucl.ac.uk	January 2006 – December 2010	£3.6 million	http://www.dcal.ucl.ac.uk
Centre for Economic and Social Aspects of Genomics (CESAGen)	Professor R Chadwick	029 2087 4049 chadwickr1@cardiff.ac.uk	October 2002 – September 2007	£4.3 million	http://www.cesagen.lancs.ac.uk
Centre for Economic Learning and Social Evolution (ELSE)	Professor M Armstrong	020 7679 4565 mark.armstrong@ucl.ac.uk	October 1995 – September 2010	£3 million	http://else.econ.ucl.ac.uk

Continued

Investment Name	Director	Telephone & Email	Dates	Current Grant	Website
Centre for Economic Performance (CEP)	Professor J Van Reenen	020 7955 7049 j.vanreenen@lse.ac.uk	April 1990 – September 2010	£5.1 million	http://cep.lse.ac.uk
Electricity Policy Research Group (EPRG)	Professor D Newbery	0122 3335 246 david.newbery@econ.cam.ac.uk	October 2005 – September 2010	£2.4 million	http://www.electricitypolicy.org.uk
Families and Social Capital Research Group	Professor R Edwards	020 7815 5750 edwardra@lsbu.ac.uk	January 2002 – March 2007	£2.8 million	http://www.lsbu.ac.uk/families
Genomics Policy and Research Forum	Professor S Yearley	0131 651 4740 steve.yearley@ed.ac.uk	August 2004 – July 2009	£2.9 million	http://www.genomicsforum.ac.uk
Centre for Genomics in Society (Egenis)	Professor J Dupré	0139 2269 127 j.a.dupre@exeter.ac.uk	October 2002 – September 2007	£2.5 million	http://www.centres.ex.ac.uk/egenis
Global Poverty Research Group	Dr F Teal	0186 527 1084 francis.teal@economics.ox.ac.uk	August 2002 – July 2007	£2.6 million	http://www.gprg.org
Centre for the Study of Globalisation and Regionalisation (CSGR)	Professor R Higgott Professor J Sholte	024 7652 4633 richard.higgott@warwick.ac.uk 024 7657 2939 scholte@warwick.ac.uk	October 1997 – September 2007	£2.4 million	http://www.csgr.org
Centre for Research on Innovation and Competition (CRIC)	Professor J Howells	0161 275 7374 jeremyhowells@manchester.ac.uk	October 1996 – September 2006	£2.6 million	http://www.cric.ac.uk
Centre for Social and Economic Research on Innovation in Genomics (Innogen)	Professor J Tait	0131 650 9174 joyce.tait@ed.ac.uk	October 2002 – September 2007	£2.1 million	http://www.innogen.ac.uk

Vital Statistics: Research Research Centres and Groups

Research centres and groups 2006-07

Continued

Investment Name	Director	Telephone & Email	Dates	Current Grant	Website
Centre for Market and Public Organisation (CMPO)	Professor S Burgess	0117 928 8436 simon.burgess@bristol.ac.uk	October 2004 – September 2009	£1.1 million	http://www.bris.ac.uk/cmipo
Centre for the Microeconomic Analysis of Public Policy (CMAPP)	Professor R Blundell	020 7291 4820 rblundel@ifs.org.uk	April 1991 – September 2009	£4.2 million	http://www.ifs.org.uk/esrc
Research Centre on Micro-social Change (MISOC)	Professor S Pudney	0120 687 3789 spudney@essex.ac.uk	October 2004 – September 2009	£3.3 million	http://www.iseressex.ac.uk/misoc
Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS)	Professor S Vertovec	0186 527 4701 steven.vertovec@compas.ac.uk	October 2003 – September 2008	£3.4 million	http://www.compas.ox.ac.uk
Centre for Organisation and Innovation (COI)	Professor T Wall	0114 222 3254 t.d.wall@sheffield.ac.uk	October 1996 – September 2006	£2.1 million	http://esrccoi.group.shef.ac.uk
Complex Product Systems Innovation Research Centre (CoPS)	Professor M Hobday Professor H Rush	0127 387 7153 m.g.hobday@sussex.ac.uk 0127 387 7912 h.j.rush@bton.ac.uk	October 1996 – September 2006	£1.8 million	http://www.cops.ac.uk
Centre on Skills, Knowledge and Organisational Performance (SKOPE)	Mr K Mayhew	0186 527 6434 skopec@ox.ac.uk	October 1998 – September 2008	£3.0 million	http://www.economics.ox.ac.uk/skope
Centre for Social and Economic Research on the Global Environment (CSERGE)	Professor K Turner	0160 359 2551 r.k.turner@uea.ac.uk	October 2001 – September 2007	£395.137	http://www.uea.ac.uk/env/cserge

Continued

Investment Name	Director	Telephone & Email	Dates	Current Grant	Website
Centre for Social, Technological and Environmental Pathways to Sustainability (STEPS)	Professor M Leach	0127 367 8685 m.leach@ds.ac.uk	October 2006 – September 2011	£3.8 million	http://www.steps-centre.org
Centre for Research on Socio-Cultural Change (CRESC)	Professor M Savage Professor T Bennett Professor K Williams	0161 275 8985 cresc@manchester.ac.uk 0161 275 8985 cresc@manchester.ac.uk 0161 275 8985 cresc@manchester.ac.uk	October 2004 – September 2009	£3.7 million	http://www.cresc.man.ac.uk
Research Group on Lifestyles, Values and Environment (RESOLVE)	Professor T Jackson	0148 368 9072 t.jackson@surrey.ac.uk	April 2006 – March 2011	£2.9 million	http://www.surrey.ac.uk/resolve
Sussex Energy Group	Professor G MacKerron	0127 367 8166 g.s.mackerron@sussex.ac.uk	April 2005 – March 2010	£2.8 million	http://www.sussex.ac.uk/sussexenergygroup
Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research	Professor M Hulme	0160 359 3162 m.hulme@uea.ac.uk	October 2000 – March 2009	£0.8 million (ESRC contribution)	http://www.tyndall.ac.uk
UK Energy Research Centre (UKERC)	Mr J Loughhead Professor J Skea	020 7594 1574 admin@ukerc.ac.uk 020 7594 1574 jim.skea@ukerc.ac.uk	April 2004 – April 2009	£3.2 million (ESRC contribution)	http://www.ukerc.ac.uk
Wellbeing in Developing Countries Research Group (WeD)	Dr A McGregor	0122 582 6384 j.a.mcgregor@bath.ac.uk	October 2002 – September 2007	£3.3 million	http://www.welldev.org.uk

Research Programmes and Priority Networks

Research programmes are groups of related projects, together addressing one or more of ESRC's priority themes. They are typically five years in duration. Selection is based on a competition worked around a specification for the programme, with peer and merit review processes involved. Programmes provide added value over and above stand alone research projects. They are designed to address medium-term social and economic issues, often drawing on the skills and knowledge of a variety of disciplines in the UK and abroad.

Priority networks are similar to programmes in involving groups of related projects but participation is managed by the researchers themselves and they operate on a smaller scale.

Research programmes and priority networks 2006-07

Investment Name	Director	Telephone & Email	Dates	Current Grant & Projects	Website
AIM Management Research Initiative	Professor R Wensley	0870 734 3000 aim@wbs.ac.uk	January 2002 – October 2007	£21.8 million 40 Fellowships	http://www.aimresearch.org
Cultures of Consumption	Professor F Trentmann	020 7079 0603 esrcconsume@bbk.ac.uk	January 2002 – June 2007	£4 million (ESRC Contribution) Phase I – 16 projects Phase II – 10 projects	http://www.consume.bbk.ac.uk
Development and Persistence of Human Capability and Resilience in its Social and Geographical Context	Professor M Bartley	020 7679 1707 m.bartley@ucl.ac.uk	October 2003 – June 2007	£2 million 6 projects	http://www.ucl.ac.uk/capabilityandresilience
E-Society	Professor R Burrows	0190 443 3048 rjb7@york.ac.uk	January 2002 – October 2007	£4.8 million Phase I – 15 projects Phase II – 13 projects	http://www.york.ac.uk/res/e-society
Evolution of Business Knowledge (EBK)	Professor H Scarbrough	024 7652 3840 harryscarbrough@wbs.ac.uk	April 2003 – December 2006	£3.5 million (ESRC Contribution) 13 projects	http://www.ebkresearch.org

Continued

Investment Name	Director	Telephone & Email	Dates	Current Grant & Projects	Website
Gender Equality Network (GeNet)	Dr J Scott	0122 333 4520 jls1004@cam.ac.uk	October 2004 – September 2009	£3.2 million Theme I – 3 projects Theme II – 4 projects Theme III – 2 projects	http://www.genet.ac.uk
Identities and Social Action	Professor M Wetherell	0190 827 4066 m.s.wetherell@open.ac.uk	April 2003 – December 2008	£4 million 25 projects	http://www.identities.org.uk
New Dynamics of Ageing: A Cross Council Research Programme	Professor A Walker	0114 222 6467 a.c.walker@sheffield.ac.uk	April 2005 – December 2012	£20 million Phase I – 2 Projects, 11 Networks	http://www.newdynamics.group.shef.ac.uk
New Security Challenges	Professor S Croft	0121 414 6522 s.j.croft@bham.ac.uk	January 2003 – December 2007	£4 million Phase I – 18 projects Phase II – 14 projects	http://www.newsecuritybham.ac.uk
Non-Governmental Public Action (NGPA)	Professor J Howell	020 7955 7360 j.a.howell@lse.ac.uk	May 2004 – April 2009	£4.9 million 27 projects	http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/NGPA
Pathways into and out of Crime: Risk, Resilience and Diversity	Dr J Hine	0116 257 7764 jhine@dmu.ac.uk	October 2001 – July 2006	£1.3 million 5 projects	http://www.pcmd.group.shef.ac.uk

Research programmes and priority networks 2006-07

Continued

Investment Name	Director	Telephone & Email	Dates	Current Grant & Projects	Website
People at the Centre of Communication and Information Technologies (PACCIT)	Professor A Anderson	0138 2386 576 A.H.Anderson@dundee.ac.uk	October 1999 – September 2006	£6.5 million Phase I – 13 projects Link Phase I – 5 projects Link Phase II – 12 projects	http://www.paccit.gla.ac.uk
Public Services: Quality, Performance and Delivery	Professor C Hood	0186 5279 350 christopher.hood@all-souls.oxford.ac.uk	November 2004 – October 2009	£4.9 million Phase I – 14 projects Phase II – 14 projects	http://www.publicservices.ac.uk
Religion and Society Programme	Professor L Woodhead	0152 4592 416 l.woodhead@lancaster.ac.uk	January 2007 – 31 December 2011	£2.8 million (ESRC Contribution)	http://www.wahrc.ac.uk/apply/research/sf/ahrCSI/religion_society.asp
Rural Economy and Land Use (RELU)	Professor P Lowe	0191 222 6903 relu@ncl.ac.uk	September 2003 – August 2011	£5 million (ESRC Contribution) Phase I – 42 projects Phase II – 11 projects Phase III – 10 projects	http://www.relu.ac.uk
Science in Society	Professor S Rayner	0186 528 8938 steve.rayner@sbs.ox.ac.uk	January 2002 – December 2007	£5.2 million 44 projects	http://www.sci-soc.net

Continued

Investment Name	Director	Telephone & Email	Dates	Current Grant & Projects	Website
Social Context and Responses to Risk (SCARR)	Professor P Taylor-Gooby	0122 782 7514 p.taylor-gooby@kent.ac.uk	October 2003 – September 2008	£2.8 million 9 projects	http://www.kent.ac.uk/scarr
Stem Cells Initiative: Capacity Building and Research II	Professor A Webster	0190 443 3041 ajw25@york.ac.uk	October 2006 – September 2008	£818,000 6 fellowships	http://www.york.ac.uk/res/sci/introduction.htm
Teaching and Learning Research Programme (TLRP)	Professor A Pollard	020 7911 5581 a.pollard@joe.ac.uk	March 1999 December 2008	£3.6 million (ESRC contribution) Phase I – 4 networks Phase II – 9 projects Phase III – 23 projects Phase IV – 7 projects 8 Thematic Seminar Series Phase V – 7 projects	http://www.tlrp.org
World Economy and Finance Programme (WEF)	Professor J Drifill	020 7631 6417 j.drifill@ems.bbk.ac.uk	March 2004 – February 2009	£6.3 million Phase I – 16 Phase II – 10 Projects	http://www.worldeconomyandfinance.org

Vital Statistics: Research

Research Grants

Research grants are used to investigate new and pressing issues as well as provide a stepping stone for new researchers. Ranging from £15,000 to £1.5 million, they give the Council the flexibility to respond rapidly to the latest developments in the academic world. Grants are selected for their scientific excellence from proposals made by researchers in any area of the social sciences and at any time of their choice.

Applications processed in 2006-07

Type of Grant	Applications	Awards	Success Rate %
Standard	451	85	19
Fellowship	61	9	15
Small	421	165	39
Total	933	259	28

Responsive applications and awards by institution 2006-07

Institute	Applications	Awards	Success Rate %
Aberdeen	12	6	50
African Youth Foundation	1		0
Aston	5	1	20
Bath	5		0
Birmingham	28	5	18
Bolton	1		0
Bournemouth	2		0
Bradford	5		0
Brighton	4	1	25
Bristol	48	16	33
Brunel	19	2	11
Cambridge	22	9	41
Central England	1	1	100
Central Lancashire	4	2	50
Coventry	3		0
City	8	2	25
Cranfield	1		0
De Montfort	2		0
Dundee	15	4	27
Durham	14	3	21
East Anglia	10	2	20
Royal Free Hospital School of Medicine	1		0
Royal Holloway	10	4	40
School of Asian and Oriental Studies	2	1	50
School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine	2	1	50
University College London	25	8	32
Loughborough	8	1	13
Manchester (Including Umist)	25	6	24
Manchester Metropolitan	5	1	20
Middlesex	9	2	22
Medical Research Council	1		0
Napier	1	1	100
National Centre for Sensor Research	4	3	75
Newcastle	11	1	9
National Institute of Economic and Social Research	1	1	100
Northumbria at Newcastle	2	1	50
Nottingham	16	6	38
Nottingham Trent	2		0
Overseas Development Institute	1		0
Open	18	3	17

Institute	Applications	Awards	Success Rate %	Institute	Applications	Awards	Success Rate %
East London	6		0	Oxford	28	8	29
Edinburgh	20	3	13	Oxford Brookes	5	1	20
Essex	17	6	35	Paisley	2		0
Exeter	14	6	43	Plymouth	18	4	22
Glamorgan	4		0	Portsmouth	7	1	14
Glasgow	15	5	33	Queen Margaret (Edinburgh)	5	3	60
Glasgow Caledonian	5	2	40	Queens Belfast	12	3	25
Gloucestershire	2		0	Reading	10	2	20
Heriot Watt (Edinburgh)	2		0	Robert Gordon (Aberdeen)	2	1	50
Herts	4	2	50	Roehampton	1	1	100
Huddersfield	3		0	Salford	3	1	33
Hull	10	2	20	Sheffield	25	9	36
Institute of Fiscal Studies	4	2	50	Sheffield Hallam	2		0
Intrac	1		0	South Bank	2		0
Keele	8	1	13	Southampton	16	5	31
Kent at Canterbury	18	6	33	St Andrews	5		0
Kingston	1		0	Stirling	16	8	50
Lancaster	20	11	55	Strathclyde	11	3	27
Leeds	17	3	18	Sunderland	6	2	33
Leeds Metropolitan	2		0	Surrey	8	1	13
Leicester	7	2	29	Sussex	14	4	29
Liverpool	13	5	38	Teesside	1		0
Liverpool Hope	1		0	Wales:			
London Metropolitan	4	3	75	Aberystwyth	1		0
London:				Bangor	7	3	43
Birkbeck	8	4	50	Cardiff	27	6	22
St Georges Medical School	2	1	50	Swansea	12	2	17
Goldsmiths	13	4	31	Uhi (Iri)	1		0
Imperial	4	1	25	Ulster	4	1	25
Institute of Education	12	2	17	Warwick	31	10	32
Kings	12	3	25	West of England	6		0
London Business School	1		0	Westminster	2	1	50
London School of Economics and Political Science	15	4	27	Wolverhampton	1		0
Queen Mary and Westfield	5	2	40	York	15	5	33
				Total	933	259	28

Research grants by number

	Number of Applications Considered			Number Graded Alpha			Number Recommended for Award			Alpha Rated %			Total Applications Funded %			Value £m
	Standard	Small	Fellowship	Standard	Small	Fellowship	Standard	Small	Fellowship	Standard	Small	Fellowship	Standard	Small	Fellowship	
	451	421	61	395	390	53	85	165	9	88	93	87	19	39	15	
2006-07																
Grand Total		933		838			259				90			28		48.5*
Total 2005-06		1051		914			282				87			27		26.2
Total 2004-05		935		779			257				83			27		21.9
Total 2003-04		831		664			283				80			34		22.9
Total 2002-03		810		583			205				72			25		15.7
Total 2001-02		734		539			230				73			31		15.8
Total 2000-01		649		533			217				82			33		15.2

* At 100 per cent Full Economic Costing (fEC). ESRC currently fund 80 per cent of this figure, which is £38.8 million.

Numbers of applications and awards by territory

Country	Number of Applications							Number of Awards							Success %				
	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
	595	687	783	876	751	162	233	221	236	208	27	33	28	27	28	33	28	27	28
England																			
Scotland	92	87	82	104	115	28	30	20	21	36	30	34	24	20	34	24	20	31	31
Wales	41	42	58	62	51	12	18	12	21	11	29	43	21	34	21	21	34	22	22
Northern Ireland	16	11	11	9	16	3	5	4	4	4	19	5	36	44	0	36	44	25	25
Overseas	n/a	4	1	0	0	n/a	0	0	0	0	n/a	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	745	831	935	1051	933	205	283	257	282	259	205	283	257	282	205	283	257	282	259

Applications and awards by discipline area

Country	Rank Order 2006-07	Applications					Awards					Success rate %				
		2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Area Studies	13	4	6	13	12	41	0	2	4	3	0	3				7
Demography					3	1										0
Economic and Social History	8	43	32	32	41	27	16	12	8	15	12	37	38	25	37	44
Economics	2	85	117	77	112	82	29	48	30	34	28	34	41	39	30	34
Education	7	67	62	83	100	97	11	11	20	20	13	16	18	24	20	13
Environmental Planning	14	14	19	19	17	15	4	5	2	5	2	29	26	11	29	13
Human Geography	5	53	51	56	43	42	13	18	19	6	16	25	35	34	14	38
Interdisciplinary Studies		20	25	46	35		9	4	11	5		45	16	24	14	
Linguistics	10	29	35	30	38	26	9	18	12	15	8	31	51	40	39	31
Management and Business Studies	6	45	55	63	65	63	7	12	14	12	15	16	22	22	18	24
Political Science and International Relations	4	60	70	63	62	67	13	15	12	16	21	22	21	19	26	31
Psychology	1	176	184	240	268	230	51	78	72	91	89	29	42	30	34	39
Science and Technology Studies					6	19				2	0				33	
Social Work	13				3	15				1	3				33	20
Social Anthropology	12	36	27	26	35	24	14	9	9	12	6	39	33	35	34	25
Social Policy	9	35	36	38	64	30	5	11	8	13	9	14	31	21	20	30
Socio-Legal Studies	11	16	11	32	9	28	6	5	6		7	38	45	19		25
Sociology	3	115	93	97	126	118	28	33	25	30	24	24	35	26	24	20
Statistics and Computing and Methodologies	13	12	8	20	12	8	4	2	5	2	3	33	25	25	17	38
Total		810	831	935	1051	933	219	283	257	282	259					

Major co-funding

Topic / Title	Partner
AIM Management Initiative	Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC)
Centre for Analysis of Risk and Regulation	Deutsche Bank
Centre for Economic Performance	Department for Education and Skills (DfES), Leverhulme Trust
Centre for Market and Public Organisation	Leverhulme Trust
Centre for Research on Innovation and Competition	British Nuclear Fuels Ltd, Scottish Enterprise, Department of Trade and Industry (DTI)
Corporate Governance Ideas Factory	DTI, Advanced Institute of Management (AIM)
Cultures of Consumption programme	Art and Humanities Research Council
Evolution of Business Knowledge programme	DTI
Grand Challenges (AIM)	EPSRC
National Prevention Research Initiative	12 partners across the health arena
New Dynamics of Ageing	Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC), EPSRC, Medical Research Council (MRC)
People at the Centre of Communication and Information Technologies programme	EPSRC, DTI
Problem Gambling	Responsibility in Gambling Trust
Rural Economy and Land Use programme	BBSRC, Natural Environment Research Council (NERC), Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), Scottish Executive
Science in Society programme	Defra
Scottish Demography	Scottish Executive
Sustainable Technologies Initiative	EPSRC, DTI, Defra, BBSRC
Teaching and Learning Research Programme	Higher Education Funding Council for England, DfES, Scottish Executive, Welsh Assembly Government, Northern Ireland Executive
Towards a Sustainable Energy Economy programme UK Energy Research Centre	EPSRC, NERC
Tyndall Centre for Climate Change	NERC, EPSRC
Water Shortage	Water Industry

Investments funded for some or all of 2006-07

Vital Statistics: Research Research Ventures

The Research Ventures fund was introduced in 2004, to be available for collaborative proposals which lie outside current ESRC funding modes. The ESRC Ventures Scheme offers the opportunity to collaborate with interested parties willing to co-fund research programmes.

Approved ventures agreed to date:

	Partners Contribution	ESRC Contribution	Period
Corporate Governance Ideas Factory	£200,000	£100,000	2006-07 – 2007-08
Grand Challenges - Advanced Institute of Management (AIM)	£2 million	£227,000	2006-07 – 2008-09
Impacts of Higher Education Institutions on Regional Economies	£1.3 million	£1.3 million	2007-08 – 2009-10
Justice by Race and Geography	£80,000	£150,000	2007-08 – 2009-10
Management Education Fellowship Scheme	£600,000	£645,000	2007-08 – 2010-11
National Prevention Research Initiative	£10.8 million	£1.3 million	2006-07 – 2009-10
Northern Ireland Longitudinal Study	£150,000	£150,000	2007-08 – 2009-10
Population/Reproductive Health	£1 million	£1 million	2007-08 – 2010-11
Problem Gambling	£500,000	£500,000	2005-06 – 2008-09
Public Health	£17.5 million	£2,500,000	2007-08 – 2012-13
Radicalisation Research Initiative	£800,000	£1,700,000	2007-08 – 2009-10
Religion, Belief and Society	£5.5 million	£2.8 million	2007-08 – 2010-11
Research Centre on Bilingualism	£2.5 million	£2.5 million	2007-08 – 2011-12
Scottish Demography	£150,000	£150,000	2005-06 – 2007-08
Skills Survey	£526,000	£540,000	2005-06 – 2007-08
Spatial Economics	£2.5 million	£2.5 million	2007-08 – 2011-12
Sustainable Communities	£400,000	£400,000	2007-08 – 2008-09
Technology Enhanced Learning	£5.3 million	£5.3 million	2006-07 – 2011-12
Transport Research Centre	£3.3 million	£3 million	2007-08 – 2012-13
Water Shortage	£63,000	£63,000	2006-07 – 2007-08
Total	£57,619,000	£27,725,000	

Vital Statistics: Research Evaluation

The backbone of evaluation is peer review and almost all of our evaluation work involves selecting, briefing, supporting and in other ways dealing with peer reviewers.

Evaluation grades by research area

Research Area	Grade %						Total
	O	G	P	U	Uh		
Economics and Economic Development	23	69	8	0	0	100	
Geography, Environment, Urban/Rural and Transport Studies and Area Studies	14	74	12	0	0	100	
Government, Political Science and Law	27	63	10	0	0	100	
Education, Psychology, Cognition and Linguistics	26	68	5	1	0	100	
Sociology, Social Policy, Social Work and Social Anthropology	22	68	10	0	0	100	
Management, Business Studies and Innovation	17	76	7	0	0	100	
Statistics, Computing, Infrastructure, Demography and Research Methodology	23	67	9	0	1	100	
Average Performance 1995-06	29	68	3	0	0	100	
Average Performance 2006-07	23	68	9	0	0	100	

The table above shows the breakdown of evaluation grades in each research area as a percentage of the total in that particular area. Note that unless otherwise stated, these percentages refer to the cumulative total of all research projects evaluated between 1995 and 2006.

Grade	Definition
Outstanding (O)	High quality research making an important contribution to the development of the subject. An outstanding grade indicates that a project has fully met its objectives and has provided an exceptional research contribution well above average or very high in relation to the level of the award.
Good (G)	Good quality research making a useful contribution to the development of the subject. A good grade indicates a project whose research activities and contribution is fully commensurate with the level of the award, approach and subject area, and which has addressed its major objectives.
Problematic (P)	Acceptable research but with problems or weaknesses in the design, method, analysis or outcomes. A problematic grade indicates a project which has failed to address one or more of its major objectives; has encountered significant difficulties in the execution of the project, has incomplete work or has achieved substantially less than expected for the level of the award, the approach or the subject area.
Unacceptable (U)	Research poorly conducted with unreliable results; or report with insufficient details on which to base a satisfactory judgement. An unacceptable grade indicates a project which has failed to conduct the work as agreed at the time of the award (and any subsequent agreed changes to the work plan); for example failure to conduct agreed surveys or analyses, or failure to address most of the major objectives.

Grade Definitions

Vital Statistics: Research

Performance Indicators

The charts below show ESRC's achievements against the RCUK (PEG) Performance Indicators.

Academic publications from ESRC research investments

	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Research Papers	1,507	1,049	1,015	799
Books and Chapters	994	485	466	319
Total	2,501	1,534	1,481	1,118

Papers published in refereed journals

	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
No. of refereed papers	1,075	665	540	524
Proportion of all papers	71%	63%	53%	66%

ESRC projects achieving highest approval ratings

	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
No. of projects with highest approval rating	294	296	333	337
Percentage of total projects	94%	91%	95%	97%

Proportion of ESRC students submitting PhD theses within four years

	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
No. of theses submitted	343	312	325	210
Percentage within four years	84%	80%	82%	80%

* The reduction in the number of students submitting in the 2006-07 survey compared to previous years represents a transitional drop in new research only awards caused by the ESRC move to the 1+3 studentship funding regime in 2002.

Vital Statistics: Data and Methods

Research Resources

Research resources are the foundations upon which our researchers can undertake work of the highest quality and relevance.

These resources include not only data, but also the expertise in research methods required to utilise this data, and the information technologies to improve access to the ESRC's world class information resources.

Resource centres provide quick and easy access to key research resources such as datasets. **Resource programmes** are a group of projects aimed at developing the tools and techniques which underpin high quality research.

Research resources 2006-07

Investment Name	Director	Telephone & Email	Dates	Current Grant	Website
British Election Study (BES)	Professor D Sanders	0120 687 2544 sanders@essex.ac.uk	April 2004 – March 2007	£1.3 million	http://www.essex.ac.uk/bes
Centre for Longitudinal Studies (CLS)	Professor H Joshi	0207 612 6874 h.joshi@ioe.ac.uk	October 2004 – 31 March 2010	£10.2 million	http://www.cls.ioe.ac.uk
Courses in Applied Social Surveys (CASS)	Professor J McDonald	023 8059 2531 j.w.mcdonald@soton.ac.uk	November 2005 – October 2008	£302,400	http://www.s3n.soton.ac.uk/cass
Economic and Social Data Service (ESDS)	Professor K Schürer	0120 687 2009 schurer@essex.ac.uk	January 2003 – September 2007	£7.8 million	http://www.data-archive.ac.uk
ESRC Census of the Population	Professor D Martin	023 8059 3808 http://www.census.ac.uk	August 2006 – July 2011	£7.5 million	http://www.census.ac.uk
ESRC Question Bank (Qb)	Professor M Bulmer	0148 368 9456 d.j.martin@soton.ac.uk	November 2005 – August 2008	£502,537	http://qb.soc.surrey.ac.uk
European Social Survey (ESS) – UK component	Ms A Park Ms K Thomson	020 7549 9573 a.park@natcen.ac.uk 0171 250 1866 k.thomson@natcen.ac.uk	October 2005 – July 2007	£492,197	http://www.europeansocialsurvey.org

Continued

Investment Name	Director	Telephone & Email	Dates	Current Grant	Website
International Bibliography of the Social Sciences (IBSS)	Ms J Sykes	020 7955 7455 ibss@se.ac.uk	April 2005 – March 2008	£814,471	http://www.ibss.ac.uk
Intute: Social Sciences	Ms D Hiom	0117 928 7117 dhiom@bristol.ac.uk	September 2006 – July 2007	£152,769	http://www.intute.ac.uk/socialsciences
Longitudinal Studies Centre – Scotland	Professor P Boyle	0133 446 2397 p.boyle@st-andrews.ac.uk	July 2005 – June 2009	£970,765	http://www.lscs.ac.uk
National Centre for e-Social Science (NCeSS)	Professor P Halfpenny	0161 275 2493 peter:halfpenny@nccss.ac.uk	April 2007 – March 2012	£4.7 million	http://www.nccss.ac.uk
National Centre for Research Methods (NCRM)	Professor C Skinner	023 8059 2533 cjs@soton.ac.uk	April 2004 – March 2009	£6.5 million	http://www.ncrm.ac.uk
Research Methods Programme (RMP)	Professor A Dale	0161 275 4876 angela.dale@manchester.ac.uk	October 2002 – September 2007	£6.4 million	http://www.ccsrac.uk/methods
Strategic Advisor for Research Resources	Professor P Elias	024 7652 3286 peter:elias@warwick.ac.uk	October 2004 – September 2007	£518,063	http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/hnds
UK Longitudinal Studies Centre	Professor N Buck	0120 687 3066 nhb@essex.ac.uk	October 2004 – September 2009	£13.5 million	http://www.iseressex.ac.uk/ulsc
Understanding Population Trends and Processes (UPTAP); A Secondary Data Analysis Initiative	Professor J Stillwell	0113 343 3315 j.c.h.stillwell@leeds.ac.uk	October 2005 – December 2011	£3.3 million Phase 1 – 2 projects	http://www.uptap.net
Workplace Employment Relations Survey (WERS)	Mr J Forth	020 7654 1954 wers2004@niesrac.uk			http://www.wers2004.info

Vital Statistics: Data and Methods

Datasets

A dataset is defined by the ESRC datasets policy, as any collection of data generated by, or of particular interest to, the social science community which may be considered for archiving. This may include computer-readable data, audio and visual recordings, hand-written documents such as diaries and fieldwork notes, photographs and artefacts. The Economic and Social Data Service (ESDS) is a national service that provides access and support for an extensive range of key economic and social data, both qualitative and quantitative, spanning a range of disciplines and themes.

Datasets delivered – April 2000 to March 2007

This graph shows the steady rise in the usage of datasets delivered by ESDS. The dramatic growth in datasets delivered occurred with the introduction of new technology, such as the download facility.



*Figures for Nesstar analyses unknown between August-October 2005

Top ten disciplines by usage – April 2006 to March 2007

Economics and econometrics is ranked top, followed by sociology in second. This is largely due to the type of research being undertaken by economists working in the field of labour markets and employment.

Disciplines	Rank
Economics and Econometrics	1
Sociology	2
Business and Management Studies	3
Statistics and Operational Research	4
Politics and International Studies	5
Social Policy and Administration	6
Other Studies and Professions Allied to Medicine	7
Geography	8
Psychology	9
Education	10

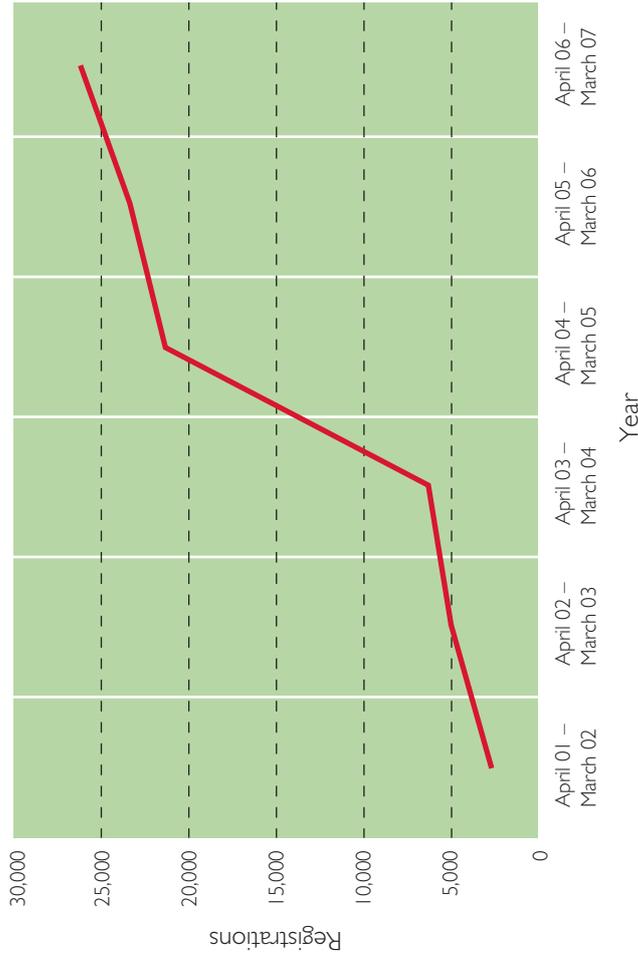
Top 20 institutions by usage – April 2006 to March 2007

The top two institutions house four leading centres conducting research on employment and labour markets. These are the Warwick Institute for Employment Research, the Industrial Relations Research Unit (formally the Centre for International Employment Relations Research (CINTER)), the ESRC Research Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion and the Centre for Economic Performance (CEP). CINTER and CEP were previously funded by the ERSC. The University of Manchester houses the Cathie Marsh Centre for Census and Survey Research.

Institutions	Rank
University of Warwick	1
London School of Economics	2
University of Manchester	3
University of Essex	4
University of Oxford	5
University College London	6
Cardiff University	7
University of Nottingham	8
University of Leeds	9
University of Edinburgh	10
University of York	11
University of Surrey	12
University of Bristol	13
University of Cambridge	14
University of Sussex	15
University of Leicester	16
University of Birmingham	17
Birkbeck College	18
University of Sheffield	19
University of Southampton	20

Number of new registrations – April 2001 to March 2007

This graph shows that over the life of the service, the numbers registering to use the ESDS has dramatically increased. This is a major achievement for the service since, prior to its existence, the number of users in a given year would normally have been between two and three thousand.



Vital Statistics: Data and Methods

Datasets

Most used datasets – April 2006 to March 2007

Title	Rank
Labour Force Survey	1
General Household Survey	2
Family Expenditure Survey	3
British Household Panel Survey	4
British Household Social Attitudes Survey	5
Health Survey for England	6
British Crime Survey	7
National Child Development Study	8
Family Resources Survey	9
1970 British Cohort Study	10
British Election Studies	11
ONS Omnibus Survey	12
Workplace Employee Relations Survey	13
Expenditure and Food Survey	14
Road Accident Data	15
Eurobarometers	16
Millennium Cohort Study	17
Annual Population Survey	18
National Travel Survey	19
English Longitudinal Study of Ageing	20

Vital Statistics: International International Work

ESRC is committed to raising awareness of British social science on the international stage. We collaborate in activities in Europe and elsewhere around the world. We have a particular responsibility to maximise international resources and opportunities for the UK social science community. Developments within the European Union, and in particular the Framework Programmes, are a priority and we are committed to increasing the role of social scientists in European research projects.

Major international investments

Investment	Number of Awards	Total Amount
British Association for the Advancement of Science (BA)/ESRC China exchange scheme	22	£44.5 thousand
BA/ESRC Visiting Fellowships for South Asia	7	£30.8 thousand
BA/ESRC Visiting Fellowships for the Middle East	12	£53.7 thousand
Bilateral collaborative research projects*	13	£1.21 million**
The Department for International Development scheme projects	20	£6.7 million
European Collaborative Research Projects (ECRP)	2	£47.5 thousand**
ESRC/Social Science Research Council Transatlantic Collaborative Fellowships	15	£60 thousand
International micro data studies	4	£103.6 thousand
Language Based Area Studies Centres	5	£300 thousand
Non-Governmental Public Action Programme	10	£1.6 million
Centre for Social, Technological and Environmental Pathways to Sustainability (STEPS)	1	£279 thousand

* 5 – US, 4 – Australia, 3 – Ireland, 1 – Germany.

** Most bilateral collaborative research projects and all ECRP (to a combined value of £1.07 million) are funded under the Research Grants Board responsive mode schemes; they are therefore also represented in the responsive applications and awards 2006-07 table on page 51.

Vital Statistics: Training

Studentships

Part of the ESRC's Mission Statement is to support postgraduate training in the social sciences. Well-trained research students are the seedbed for the social science researchers of the future. For this reason, the ESRC has a Training and Development Board to support postgraduate students and meet the training needs of researchers throughout their career.

New studentships 2006-07

Subject Area	Comp	Quota	CASE	Centre Linked	ESRC / DEFRA	ESRC / DfT	ESRC / DWP	ESRC / MRC	ESRC / NERC	ESRC / CLG	ESRC / Scot Exec	ESRC / WAG	Language Based Area			Total
													Based Studies	Professional Fellowship	Project Based	
Area Studies	3	18	3				1						25			50
Demography	1	10														11
Economic and Social History	5	15														20
Economics	3	64	1		1						2	3				74
Education	6	42												1		49
Planning		15	4							1					1	21
Environmental Sciences									17							17
Geography	6	40	11			1					1				1	60
Linguistics	5	12		1												18
Management and Business Studies	6	46	2		2											56
Medical Sciences								19								19
Politics	9	46	3										2			60
Psychology	34	47	13									1				95

Subject Area	Comp	Quota	CASE	Centre Linked	ESRC / Defra	ESRC / DfT	ESRC / DWP	ESRC / MRC	ESRC / NERC	ESRC / CLG	ESRC / Scot Exec	ESRC / WAG	Language Based Area Studies	Professorial Fellowship	Project Based	RELU	Total
Science and Technology Studies		12															12
Social Anthropology	5	17	3												1		26
Social Policy	5	20	2														27
Social Work		13	4														17
Socio-Legal Studies	2	16															18
Sociology	16	62	9		2	1									3		93
Statistics, Methods and Computing	1	16	1														19
Total:	107	511	56	1	5	2	2	19	17	1	3	4	27	1	5	1	762

Key:

Comp	DfT	NERC	Language Based Area Studies
Standard studentship competition	Department for Transport	Natural Environment Research Council	Professorial Fellowships
Quota	DWP	CLG	Project Based
CASE	Department for Work and Pensions	Communities and Local Government (formerly Office of the Deputy Prime Minister)	RELU
Collaborative Awards in Science and Engineering	MRC	Scottish Executive	Rural Economy and Land Use Programme
Centre Linked	Medical Research Council	WAG	
Defra		Welsh Assembly Government	
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs			

Vital Statistics: Training

ESRC Submission Rate Survey

The following table shows the results of the 2006 survey of PhD thesis submission rates: that is the percentage of students submitting their thesis within four years of commencing an ESRC research award.

2006 submission rates by institution

Institution	2002				Institution	2002			
	Starters	Submitters	Rate %	Rate %		Starters	Submitters	Rate %	Rate %
Aberdeen	3	3	100	100	Sussex	6	5	83	83
Birmingham	6	6	100	100	Wales:				
Bristol	12	7	58	100	Aberystwyth	4	4	100	100
Cambridge	15	13	87	100	Bangor	2	2	100	100
Cardiff	9	4	44	100	Warwick	14	13	93	93
City University	3	3	100	79	University of the West of England	1	1	100	100
Cranfield	2	2	100	100	York	4	4	100	100
Dundee	1	1	100	90	Total	264	210	80	80
Durham	8	7	88	100					
East Anglia	5	4	80	81					
Edinburgh	5	4	80	70					
Essex	8	7	88	100					
Exeter	1	1	100	100					
Glasgow	7	5	71	100					
Hull	2	2	100	70					
Keele	3	2	67	100					
Kent at Canterbury	4	2	50	100					
Lancaster	9	3	33	100					
Leeds	6	6	100	50					
Leicester	3	3	100	100					
London:									
Birkbeck	2	2	100	100					
Goldsmith's	7	6	86	50					
Imperial College	1	1	100	75					

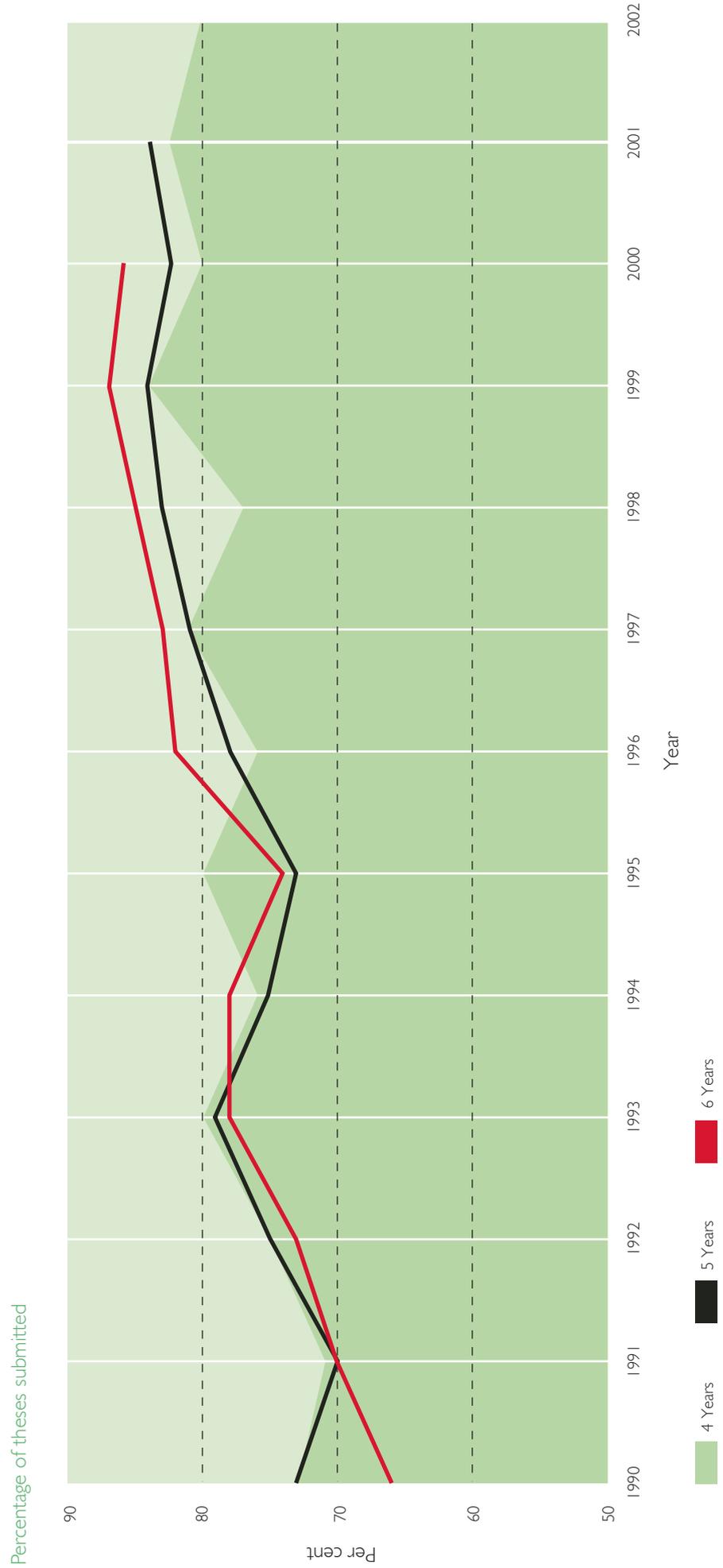
These submission rate figures exclude students who withdrew during their first year and make allowances for supervision/extensions to awards occasioned by illness, accident or the need to obtain fluency in a difficult language.

Note: The Training and Development Board's sanctions policy, which is applied to those institutions returning a rate below 60 per cent, is based on the overall rate for the last three years. The table above only shows the rate for the most recent year.

Key: Starters Students starting research awards
 Submitters Theses submitted within four years
 Rate Percentage of students submitting theses within four years of starting award

Overall submission figures – 4, 5 and 6-year rates

% of theses submitted within	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
4 years	73	71	75	80	76	80	76	81	77	84	80	82	80
5 years	73	70	75	79	75	73	78	81	83	84	82	84	
6 years	66	70	73	78	78	74	82	83	85	87	86		



Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTPs) is one of the largest schemes the ESRC funds as part of its commitment to knowledge transfer. The scheme's mission is to strengthen the competitiveness and wealth creation of the UK by enabling research organisations to apply their research knowledge to important business problems.

The KTP scheme is financially supported by sponsors, the largest of which is the Department of Trade and Industry. In addition to the ESRC, other Research Councils are also involved as are the Welsh Assembly Government and the Scottish Executive. KTPs are managed by a contracted company, Momena. In addition to the grant, the participating business/organisational partner also contributes to each project. The ESRC contribution to the scheme in 2006-07 was £1.1 million and we currently fund 44 projects.

Knowledge transfer partnerships 2006-07

Knowledge Based Institution	Knowledge Partner Organisation	ESRC Financial Contribution	Sponsors %	Region	Number of Associates
University of Aberdeen	Cornerstone Community Care	£57,960.00	Scottish Exec (50)	North	1
University of Bath	Cotswold District Council	£55,870.00		South West and Wales	1
City University	The Printers' Charitable Corporation	£81,319.00	DTI (50)	South East	1
Coventry University	Public Management Associates Limited	£67,044.00	DTI (50)	North West	1
University of Abertay Dundee	Tayside Health Board	£112,840.00	Scottish Exec (50)	North	2
University of Abertay Dundee	Tayside Health Board	£120,307.00	Scottish Exec (50)	North	2
University of Durham	North Tyneside Primary Care Trust	£76,180.00	Northern Way (50)	East	1
University of Durham	Derwentside District Council	£55,870.00		East	1
University of Glamorgan	Grwp Gwalia Cyf	£89,392.00	DTI(40) WAG (40)	South West and Wales	2
Glasgow Caledonian University	Fyne Homes Limited	£67,704.00	EPSRC (50)	North	1
Kingston University	Alexander's Commercial Services Limited	£74,928.00	DTI (50)	South	1
University of Liverpool	Arena Housing Association Limited	£81,079.00	DTI (50)	North West	1
University of Liverpool	The Steve Stuart Partnership LLP	£110,804.00		North West	2
University of Liverpool	Hi-Tech Steel Services Limited	£158,444.00	DTI (50)	North West	2
King's College London	Breast Cancer Care	£81,587.00	DTI (50)	South East	1

Knowledge transfer partnerships 2006-07

Knowledge Based Institution	Knowledge Partner Organisation	ESRC Financial Contribution	Sponsors %	Region	Number of Associates
London South Bank University	The Institute for Optimum Nutrition	£83,805.00	DTI (50)	South East	1
University College London	The Foundation for Social Entrepreneurs	£112,392.00	DTI (50)	South East	1
University College London	Dr Foster Limited	£74,928.00		South East	1
The University of Manchester	Bradford City NHS Teaching Primary Care Trust	£75,692.00	Northern Way (50)	East	1
University of Newcastle upon Tyne	Crown Prosecution Service Northumbria	£83,805.00		East	1
University of Paisley	RCA Trust	£88,977.00	Scottish Exec (50)	North	1
University of Plymouth	Penny Brohn Cancer Care	£99,338.00		South West and Wales	1
University of Portsmouth	Portsmouth City Council	£55,870.00		South East	1
University of Sheffield	Sheffield Care Trust	£67,044.00	Northern Way (50)	East	1
University of Surrey	British Telecommunications plc	£46,186.00	DTI (50)	South East	1
University of Wales Swansea	Options Consultancy Services Limited	£60,193.00	DTI (50)	South West and Wales	1

Knowledge transfer partnerships regional trends

Region	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
South East	2	2	3	2
South West	1	2	2	2
London	3	0	0	6
Wales	0	2	3	2
East	0	1	1	0
East Midlands	0	0	1	0
West Midlands	3	2	2	1
North West	6	1	2	4
North East	1	2	4	3
Yorkshire and Humberside	5	2	2	1
Scotland	3	2	1	5
Total	24	16	21	26

Knowledge transfer partnerships sector trends

Sector	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Public	11 (46%)	8 (50%)	10 (48%)	12 (46%)
Private	12 (50%)	7 (44%)	7 (33%)	9 (35%)
Voluntary	1 (4%)	1 (6%)	4 (19%)	5 (19%)
Total	24	16	21	26

Vital Statistics: ESRC Society Today

ESRC Society Today Web Trends

ESRC Society Today is the ESRC's corporate website. From its launch in 2005 it has continued to evolve with enhancements to the look and feel of the site, as well as major functional development to help users get the most out of the service.

Executive analysis 2006-07

Visitor Summary

	Total 2005-06	Total 2006-07
Unique visitors	688,023	1,606,175
Visitors who visited once	538,032	1,259,008
Visitors who visited more than once	149,991	347,167
Average visits per visitor	2.18	2.19

Visit Summary

	Total 2005-06	Total 2006-07
Visits	1,503,370.00	3,509,577
Average per day	4,129	4,794
Average visit length	0:20:15	00:20:15
Median visit length	0:02:30	00:02:30
International visits	70.07%	70.07%
Visits of unknown origin	0.44%	0.44%
Visits from UK	29.50%	29.50%

Hit Summary

	Total 2005-06	Total 2006-07
Successful hits for entire site	58,665,146	93,132,014
Average hits per day	161,167	127,229
Home page hits	395,365	9,460,127

Page View Summary

	Total 2005-06	Total 2006-07
Page views	42,527,446	69,664,314
Average per day	108,750	95,170
Average page views per visit	26.84	19.92

The table above shows some of the key statistics for the ESRC Society Today website, as with all web statistics, these need to be interpreted carefully (eg number of visits based on IP addresses of computers).

Vital Statistics: Expenditure

Research and Training Expenditure 2006-07

Regional spend 2006-07

Region	Research £000	Training £000	Overall £000
East Midlands	1,897	1,901	3,798
Eastern	12,720	3,385	16,105
London	25,553	8,370	33,924
North East	2,103	2,076	4,179
North West	9,947	3,773	13,720
South East	14,306	6,914	21,220
South West	6,049	2,922	8,972
West Midlands	5,061	2,961	8,022
Yorkshire and Humberside	5,207	3,791	8,998
Northern Ireland	861	70	932
Scotland	6,368	4,861	11,229
Wales	5,928	2,589	8,517
Other	3,842	3,239	7,063
Grand Total	99,824	46,853	146,677

Overall expenditure for research and training 2006-07



University of Manchester	8,501
University of Oxford	8,489
University of Essex	7,347
London School of Economics and Political Science	6,258
Cardiff University	6,048
University of Cambridge	5,565
University College London	5,366
University of Edinburgh	5,107
University of London: Institute of Education	4,581
University of Warwick	4,053
Total	61,314
% of Overall Total	42

Research expenditure 2006-07



University of Essex	6,437
University of Manchester	6,339
University of Oxford	5,330
London School of Economics and Political Science	4,659
University of London: Institute of Education	4,581
Cardiff University	4,529
University of Cambridge	3,780
University College London	3,468
University of Warwick	3,021
University of Edinburgh	2,729
Total	44,891
% of Overall Total	45

Training expenditure 2006-07



University of Oxford	3,159
University of Edinburgh	2,378
University of Manchester	2,162
University College London	1,880
University of Cambridge	1,786
University of Sheffield	1,607
London School of Economics and Political Science	1,599
Cardiff University	1,518
University of Bristol	1,398
University of Glasgow	1,386
Total	18,873
% of Overall Total	40



Mark, Elaine



Terry, Brick Lane Market



Financial and Other Information

Financial and Other Information

Remuneration Report

Audited Information of
Remuneration Report

Accounts

Statement of Council's and
Chief Executive's Responsibilities

Statement on Internal Control

The Certificate and Report of the
Comptroller and Auditor General
to the Houses of Parliament

Statement of Net Expenditure

Balance Sheet

Cash Flow Statement

Notes to the Accounts



Financial and Other Information

Financial and other information

- 1 The Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) is an independent executive Non-Departmental Body established by Royal Charter in 1965 for the promotion of social science research. The Charter was subsequently amended in 1994 in the light of the Science White Paper *Realising Our Potential*.
- 2 The ESRC is funded primarily through grant in aid from the Office of Science and Innovation (OSI), which is part of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI).

Principal objectives

- 3 **The Economic and Social Research Council's mission is to:**
 - promote and support by any means high-quality basic, strategic and applied research and related postgraduate training in the social sciences
 - advance knowledge and provide trained social scientists who meet the need of users and beneficiaries, thereby contributing to the economic competitiveness of the United Kingdom, the effectiveness of public services and policy, and the quality of life
 - provide advice on, and disseminate knowledge and promote public understanding of, the social sciences.
- 4 **ESRC's strategic objectives are:**
 - to maximise new research opportunities by supporting social science of the highest quality
 - to create research opportunities by identifying and pursuing new challenges for social science research
 - to strengthen our future research by training the next generation of social scientists and ensuring the health of social science disciplines
 - to provide the data and methods needed to meet future social science challenges
 - to engage with stakeholders by a full range of knowledge transfer and communication activities
 - to improve our performance on the basis of robust measurement
 - to maximise our participation in International research aimed at answering major social science questions.
- 5 **In order for ESRC to meet these objectives its work is organised in four areas:**
 - **Research:** to fund cutting-edge and excellent research that focuses on pushing back the frontiers of science and on areas of major national importance.
 - **Capacity:** to ensure the availability of sufficient first class capacity, including expert researchers, data and methodology, for the UK to undertake top class social science.
 - **Engagement:** to communicate research findings as widely as possible, to engage with our key stakeholders and to get research into practice.
 - **Performance:** to evaluate the quality and impact of our funded research and perform our work efficiently and effectively.

Risk

- 6 ESRC has adopted a risk management strategy, in line with the recommendations of the *Turnbull Report* and to widen the scope of central government assurance statements. Controls and risk bearing therefore relate to all aspects of management, not purely financial matters.
- 7 It is ESRC's view that it should demonstrate leadership in the quest for innovation and in the setting of strategies to achieve it. Innovation, and the social science research which supports it, is by its nature involved with uncertainty and hence risky outcomes. In order to seize opportunities to increase the probability of achieving its purpose ESRC has to embrace risk enterprises. ESRC has a responsibility not just to control risk, but to ensure the proper opportunities are created to allow the achievement of unplanned potential. ESRC therefore has a particular concern to ensure that the framework for managing risk involves appropriate measures to promote and safeguard innovation.
- 8 ESRC's capacity to handle risk and its risk and control framework can be found in ESRC's statement on internal control.
- 9 ESRC's main risks are recorded and monitored on the corporate risk register. The key corporate risks relate to the maintenance of social science capacity, achieving excellence in commissioned research, sustaining ESRC's reputation and influence and effectiveness of delivery.

- 10 ESRC's corporate risk register categorises risks into risk types with the current financial risks being identified as follows:
- the need for additional resources from co-funding and CSR 2007 to finance adequate research under the main research challenges identified in the ESRC *Strategic Plan*
 - the need to attract sufficient additional resources from CSR 2007 to finance levels of studentship and new data facilities and infrastructure essential for maintenance of the health of disciplines
 - the impact of Full Economic Costing (fEC) changes leads to diminution of research, or levels of demand which reduce overall volume of support.

Financial review of the year

- 11 The Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2007 record a net expenditure of £159,490 compared with a net expenditure of £135,168 in 2005-06. Note 2 to the Accounts covers the change in accounting policy in respect of the treatment of grant in aid and other funds received which has resulted in the disclosure of net expenditure as opposed to a surplus or deficit. The Government Funds as at 31 March 2007 showed a deficit of £11,371 compared to £8,424 in 2005-06. Total grant in aid drawn down was £140,508, of which £980 was deployed on capital expenditure. Capital expenditure was limited to refurbishment costs of the ESRC office, the purchase of survey data and minor IT hardware and IS developments.

Research expenditure has increased to £99,824 (£85,943 2005-06), with Postgraduate Training increasing to £46,853 (£38,456 2005-06). This reflects an increase to ESRC's budget and subsequent new investments to strengthen the social science research base and strengthen future capacity both of which are covered earlier in the Annual Report.

Research expenditure during the year amounted to £100 million. This included the first year's funding of grants costed and funded within the new fEC funding framework. Such funding only relates to new awards issued during the year on fEC terms. Detailed figures are not yet available, but based on estimates of projected fEC take up during the year of £8.4 million, it is estimated that the value of research which attracted fEC amounted to £27.4 million, which would have cost £18.9 million if it had been funded on under the previous basis.

Funding from other bodies has increased to £16,362 (£10,557 2005-06) reflecting an increase in collaborative funding on research investments.

The Balance Sheet records debtors of £13,097 (£4,309 2005-06). The increase in debtors was a result of an increase in prepayments following the payment of student grants to Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) in March that were due in April. The pre-payment was required to enable HEIs to make the appropriate payments to students in early April following ESRC's change of policy in 2006-07 which led to HEIs administering student awards as opposed to ESRC. The Balance Sheet records creditors of £41,361 compared to £20,924 in 2005-06. This increase was due to a rise in advance receipts and accrued spend covering liabilities on research awards.

Going concern

- 12 The Income and Expenditure Reserve at 31 March 2007 shows a deficit of £14,221. This reflects the inclusion of liabilities falling due in future years which will be met by future grant in aid from the ESRC's sponsoring department, the DTI. This is because, under the normal conventions applying to parliamentary control over income and expenditure, such grants may not be issued in advance of need.
- 13 Grant in aid for 2007-08, taking into account the amounts required to meet the ESRC's liabilities falling due in that year, has already been included in the department's Estimates for that year, which have been approved by Parliament. Longer term commitments are contained within existing funding allocations arising from Government Spending Review settlement figures which cover up to 2007-08. ESRC financial commitments on research and training grants beyond that period can be met well within the minimum reasonably anticipated income for those years. Such grants issued by ESRC are made under statutory powers within the terms of the Science and Technology Act 1965, applied upon the objects set out in Article 2 of the ESRC Royal Charter. This is confirmed in the ESRC Management Statement issued by OSI, as renewed in August 2005. In addition, Government Accounting regulations (GA Chapter 26.3) provides HM Treasury recognition to the validity of such statutorily based liabilities entered into within the normal course of business.
- 14 A letter of comfort has been issued by OSI confirming that they fully expect the recorded deficit on the Income and Expenditure Reserve to be extinguished over time, having regard to the resource and capital budgets to which ESRC can be expected to have access. It has accordingly been considered appropriate to adopt a going concern basis for the preparation of these financial statements.

Financial and Other Information

Evaluation

- 15 The Council places great emphasis on the evaluation of its research. The Research Evaluation Committee (REC) works independently from the Funding Boards to evaluate the impact and quality of ESRC research through a comprehensive review programme. The results inform Council's strategic decision-making and guide the Boards' investment decisions.

Project evaluations provide accountability for grant expenditure, and provide an early assessment of academic quality and research impact. The REC's analysis of project evaluation results contributes to Council's strategic planning, provides a track record of project performance to support further funding decisions and feeds into policy evaluation work.

Programme, network and centre evaluations assess academic achievements and contributions to fields of study, impact on policymakers and practitioners, and the effectiveness of capacity development and research training. The results feed into the design of new phases of research and contribute to the development of research management practice.

Scheme evaluations assess the impact and effectiveness of different modes of ESRC funding. The results inform Council's strategy for supporting particular activities such as interdisciplinary collaborations, building new research capacity and supporting career development in different sections of the research community.

Impact and policy evaluations are a central feature of the evaluation system. This work includes benchmarking the international impact of UK social science, evaluating the policy and practice impact of ESRC research and reviewing aspects of research funding policy. The results help the Council to demonstrate the wider contribution of UK social science and the national and international impact of its own portfolio.

Statutory basis

- 16 ESRC's accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Financial Reporting Manual (FREM) and the Accounts Direction, issued by the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to Section 2(2) of the Science and Technology Act 1965 and as revised in 2001 and 2007. The accounts follow best commercial practice having due regard to the Council's status.
- 17 Details of the senior members of the ESRC who are responsible for the direction of the entity are set out in the Remuneration Report.

Payment policy

- 18 ESRC observes the Confederation of British Industry's Code of Practice. The Council adheres to the principles of the Prompt Payers Code, and makes every effort to ensure compliance with the agreed terms of payment of creditors' invoices. An analysis of the Council's 2006-07 payment performance indicated that 95 per cent (2005-06 95 per cent) of invoices were paid in accordance with agreed contractual conditions or where no conditions existed, within 30 days of the presentation of a valid invoice.

Equal opportunities

- 19 The ESRC's policy on recruitment and selection is based on the ability of a candidate to perform the job regardless of gender, colour, ethnic or national origin, disability, age (up to the current retirement age of 60), marital status, sexual orientation or religion. Full and fair consideration is given to applications for employment from the disabled where they have the appropriate skills to perform the job. If disablement should occur during employment the ESRC would make every effort to maintain employment and to ensure the availability of adequate retraining and career development facilities.

Employee involvement

- 20 Information is provided to employees through the staff handbook, office notices, email and the intranet. Consultation with employees takes place through meetings of senior staff, the Joint Negotiating Consultative Committee, through bilateral, directorate, sectional meetings, and through working groups set up to look at specific organisational issues, and where appropriate through all-staff meetings.
- 21 ESRC disseminates financial information by issuing reports to Council, to the senior management team and to budget holders. Successful spending review bids and budgetary information are detailed in the Social Sciences publication, press notices and the Annual Report, all of which have a wide circulation.
- 22 All staff receive personal copies of the ESRC Operating Plan, and are then involved in developing and implementing directorate and personal objectives which flow from the Plan.

- 23 In February 1999 ESRC was recognised as an 'Investor in People' (IiP). The development of staff consultation and communication was an important element in the process involved in IiP, and ESRC will seek to develop these further as it embeds more deeply the IiP culture and approach. ESRC was successfully re-assessed in October 2003 with the next review now scheduled for November 2007.
- 24 Details of the Research Councils Pension Scheme (RCPS) are set out in Note 4 to the Accounts and details of the salary and pensions benefits of senior employees are included in the Remuneration Report.

Health and Safety

- 25 The ESRC policy is to set and maintain high standards of health and safety performance so as to ensure the health and safety of staff as well as that of others who may work in or visit the premises. To achieve this ESRC has a Health Safety Policy Statement signed by the Chief Executive, the Trade Union Health and Safety representative and the ESRC's Health and Safety advisor. The policy covers responsibilities, competencies, risks, controls, the provision of advice, performance measurement and staff consultation. The policy is accessible to all staff through ESRC's intranet along with all health and safety guidance and procedures. ESRC also has a Health and Safety committee whose role is to review the adequacy of safety training and the supply of information, consider accident statistics and safety audit reports and to help the ESRC's Health and Safety advisor carry out his/her duties.

Environmental Policy

- 26 ESRC is committed to following the joint Research Council environmental policy statement which calls for:
- compliance with all relevant legislation
 - minimise the adverse impacts of new buildings, refurbishments
 - make efficient use of natural resources
 - operate effective arrangements for waste disposal and recycling
 - promote effective environmental supply management
 - work with staff to promote more economic forms of transport
 - provide appropriate information and training to new staff.

Audit Committee

- 27 ESRC's audit committee is constructed of three members of Council plus two external co-opted members from the commercial or scientific community. The Chairman of the committee is a member of Council who is not the chair of any other Board but the current Chairman does chair the Research Evaluation Committee. The Committee meets at least three times a year to review internal and external audit matters, to generally consider Corporate Governance issues including the quality of internal control systems and to review the ESRC's accounts.

Auditors

- 28 The internal auditors of ESRC are the Research Council Internal Audit Service with an audit plan being agreed and undertaken each year.
- 29 The accounts of the ESRC are audited by the Controller and Auditor General under the terms of paragraph 3(3) of Schedule 1 of the Science and Technology Act 1965. The audit fee covering 2006-07 was £36,000. There was no auditor remuneration for non-audit work.
- 30 So far as the Accounting Officer is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the ESRC's auditors are unaware. The Accounting Officer has taken all the steps that he ought to have taken to make himself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that ESRC's auditors are aware of that information.

Post Balance Sheet Events

- 31 There were no Post Balance Sheet events between the balance sheet date and 9 July 2007, the date when the Accounting Officer despatched the accounts to the Office of Science and Innovation. The financial statements do not reflect events after this date.

Financial and Other Information

Remuneration Report 2006-07

32 This report has been prepared in accordance with schedule 7A of the Companies Act 1985 inserted by the Directors' Remuneration Report Regulations 2002.

Remuneration policy

33 The remuneration of the Chief Executive of ESRC is decided by a Remuneration Panel chaired by the Director General of the Research Councils and approved by the DTI Permanent Secretary.

34 The performance of Directors is assessed annually by the Chief Executive and the Chair through the staff performance management process. In the light of these assessments performance related pay is made in accordance with provisions of the pay remit approved by the DTI. There is no separate Remuneration Committee that considers the pay of senior staff.

35 The remuneration of ESRC's Council members and Chairman is reviewed annually by the OSI.

Contractual policy

36 The Chief Executive is contracted for the period 1 January 2003 to 31 December 2010 with all Directors being permanent employees of the ESRC. The Chief Executive and all Directors are subject to a notice period of three months and any compensation awarded for early termination is subject to the terms and conditions of the Research Council's Joint Superannuation Early Severance Scheme. Council members and Chairman are not employees of the ESRC and receive a letter of appointment from the DTI. The terms of appointment allow for members to resign from office by notice in writing to the Secretary of State. Members may also be removed from office by the Secretary of State on grounds of incapacity or misbehaviour or a failure to observe the terms and conditions of appointment.

Audited Information

Salary and pension entitlements

37 The following section provides details of the remuneration and pension interests of the Chief Executive, Directors and ESRC Council members.

Remuneration and pensions interests for Chief Executive and Directors for 2006-07 (comparative figures for 2005-06 shown in brackets)

Chief Executive and Directors	Chief Executive	Director	Director	Director
Name	Professor Ian Diamond	Mr Glyn Davies	Mr Adrain Alsop	Drs. Astrid Wissenburg
Age at 31 March 2007	53	59	50	40
Sex	Male	Male	Male	Female
Service to 31 March 2007 (years)	4	35	18	3
Salary paid 2006-07 (£k)	100-105 (105-110)*	70-75 (60-65)	60-65 (50-55)	55-60 (50-55)
% increase in salary from 2005-06	6%	7%	7.5%	7.5%
Benefits in kind	– (–)	– (–)	– (–)	– (–)
Real increase in pension at 60 (£)	2,599 (2,961)	1,862 (1,815)	1,603 (1,637)	1,114 (1,003)
Related lump sum at 31 March 2007 (£)	– (–)	93,054 (84,430)	63,166 (56,329)	– (–)
Total annual accrued pension at 60 at 31 March 2007 (£)	42,586 (38,597)	31,018 (28,143)	21,055 (18,776)	3,531 (2,334)
Cash equivalent of transfer values at 31 March 2006 (£)	641,488 (470,002)	670,026 (520,661)	336,567 (237,069)	27,415 (11,109)
Cash equivalent of transfer values at 31 March 2007 (£)	705,053	746,518	372,809	40,108
Real increase in cash equivalent of transfer values (£)	39,473 (45,854)	43,757 (42,247)	27,467 (28,488)	10,528 (9,822)
Pension provider	RCPS	RCPS	RCPS	RCPS

* includes residual relocation allowances.

38 Salary paid in 2006-07 includes gross salary; performance pay or bonuses; overtime; recruitment and retention allowances and any other allowance to the extent that it is subject to UK taxation.

Pensions

39 Details of the Research Councils' Pension Scheme (RCPS) is included in Note 4 to the Accounts.

40 The Cash Equivalent Transfer Value (CETV)

A Cash Equivalent Transfer Value (CETV) is the actuarially assessed capitalised value of the pension scheme benefits accrued by a member at a particular point in time. The benefits valued are the member's accrued benefits and any contingent spouse's pension payable from the scheme. A CETV is a payment made by a pension scheme or arrangement when the member leaves a scheme and chooses to transfer the benefits accrued in their former scheme. The pension figures shown relate to the benefits that the individual has accrued as a consequence of their total membership of the pension scheme, not just their service in a senior capacity to which disclosure applies. The CETV figures include the value of any pension benefit in another scheme or arrangement which the individual has transferred to the Research Councils' pension arrangements and for which the Civil Service Vote has received a transfer payment commensurate with the additional pension liabilities being assumed. They also include any additional pension benefit accrued to the member as a result of their purchasing additional years of pension service in the scheme at their own cost.

Financial and Other Information

41 The real increase in the value of the CETV

This reflects the increase in CETV effectively funded by the employer. It takes account of the increase in accrued pension due to inflation, contributions paid by the employee (including the value of any benefits transferred from another pension scheme or arrangement) and uses common market valuation factors for the start and end of the period.

Council members remuneration

- 42 Council members and chairman receive an honorarium in recognition of their service to ESRC, together with a refund of their reasonable expenses. The rate of honorarium is set by OSI. Council members are not employees of ESRC and the appointments are not pensionable. Members of Council who are civil servants are not entitled to receive an honorarium.
- 43 The following table details the period of appointment covering each Council member along with the remuneration received in 2006-07.

Remuneration for council members for 2006-07 comparative figures for 2005-06 shown in brackets

Name	Period of Appointment	Remuneration £k
Ms Frances Cairncross – Chairman	07-04-01 – 31-03-07	15-20 (15-20)
Professor Alan Alexander – Chair, Resources Board	01-08-03 – 31-07-08	5-10 (5-10)
Professor Patricia Broadfoot	01-08-01 – 31-07-06	0-5 (5-10)
Ms Helen Dent	01-08-03 – 31-07-07	5-10 (5-10)
Professor Fiona Devine – Chair, International Advisory Group	31-01-03 – 31-07-07	5-10 (5-10)
Professor Charlie Jeffery – Chair, Strategic Research Board	01-08-05 – 31-07-08	5-10 (-)
Mr Paul Johnson	01-08-02 – 31-07-08	- (-)
Professor Michael Lamb	01-08-06 – 31-07-09	0-5 (-)
Professor Andrew Pettigrew – Chair, Audit Committee and Research Evaluation Committee	21-10-04 – 20-10-08	5-10 (5-10)
Professor Carol Propper – Chair, Research Grants Board	01-08-05 – 31-07-08	5-10 (5-10)
Professor Judith Rees – Chair, Training and Development Board	01-08-04 – 31-07-07	5-10 (5-10)
Professor Alison Richard	01-08-04 – 31-07-07	5-10 (5-10)
Lord Adair Turner	01-08-03 – 31-03-07	5-10 (5-10)
Mr David Walker	01-02-07 – 31-07-09	0-5 (-)
Mr Andrew Winckler	01-08-03 – 05-07-06	0-5 (5-10)

28 June 2007



Ian Diamond
Accounting Officer

Accounts

Statement of Council's and Chief Executive's Responsibilities

Under paragraph three of Schedule 1 to the Science and Technology Act 1965 the Council is required to prepare a statement of account for each financial year in the form and on the basis directed by the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry with the consent of the Treasury. The accounts are prepared on an accruals basis and must show a true and fair view of the Council's state of affairs at the year end and of its income, expenditure, recognised gains and losses and cash flows for the financial year.

In preparing the accounts, the Accounting Officer is required to comply with the requirements of the Government Financial Reporting Manual and in particular to:

- observe the accounts direction issued by the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, including the relevant accounting and disclosure requirements, and apply suitable accounting policies on a consistent basis
- make judgements and estimates on a reasonable basis
- state whether applicable accounting standards as set out in the Government Financial Reporting Manual have been followed and disclose and explain any material departures in the financial statements
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis, unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Council will continue in operation.

The Accounting Officer for the Department of Trade and Industry has designated the Chief Executive of the Economic and Social Research Council as the Accounting Officer for the ESRC. The responsibilities of an Accounting Officer, including responsibility for the propriety and regularity of the public finances for which he is answerable, for the keeping of proper records and for safeguarding the Council's assets, are set out in the 'Non-Departmental Public Bodies' Accounting Officer Memorandum', issued by HM Treasury and published in "Government Accounting" (HMSO).

Statement on Internal Control

Scope of responsibility

As Accounting Officer, I have responsibility for maintaining a sound system of internal control that supports the achievement of ESRC's policies, aims and objectives, as approved by Council, whilst safeguarding the public funds and ESRC assets for which I am personally responsible, in accordance with the responsibilities assigned to me in Government Accounting.

The purpose of the system of internal control

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives; it can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of ESRC's policies, aims and objectives, to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised, and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically. The system of internal control, endorsed by Council in June 2002, has been in place in ESRC for the year ended 31 March 2007 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and accounts, and accords with HM Treasury guidance.

Capacity to handle risk

ESRC has a risk champion at director level who co-ordinates and leads on risk issues. Risk champions have also been appointed at directorate level who have a similar devolved responsibility. It is ESRC's policy to assign responsibilities to staff with appropriate skills to manage risk aspects of their work. ESRC's core business involves the commissioning of research, and research training, and ESRC operates a risk management framework which draws upon engagement of expert advice from leading members of UK and international research, and user communities across the UK. This is applied extensively to underpin ESRC scientific decision making.

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Risk and control framework

Under the policy approved by Council, ESRC's framework embeds risk management via:

- Council itself, which approves the risk policy and oversees the framework and high level risks
- Council's Audit Committee, which assesses risk management processes and reports to Council
- the Chief Executive and directors of the major functions, who are responsible for identifying and managing risks
- devolved risk management responsibilities held by staff within the directorates.

General risk awareness training has been provided to over 90 per cent of ESRC staff with more detailed training in risk assessment and management being provided to the directorate risk champions which has extended the skill base across ESRC. This group meets regularly to share issues and consider ways of continuously developing and enhancing the risk management framework.

There are also regular weekly directors and monthly senior management team meetings, which include discussion of risk aspects of ongoing and new business developments. Risk reporting routines and reviews have been enhanced so that monthly directorate reports on current work to the senior management team are supported by formal risk analyses.

ESRC operates largely within a low risk environment where the bulk of operational expenditure occurs within the higher education environment, which largely operates within a control framework subject to public sector oversight. ESRC has established a register of risks and these risks have been evaluated, to include consideration of the desired level of risk appetite having regard to ESRC strategies and priorities; controls have been assessed and responsibilities for management of risks assigned at various levels.

The key corporate risks covered by the strategy relate to maintenance of social science research capacity, achieving excellence in commissioned research, sustaining ESRC's reputation and influence and effectiveness of delivery.

Principal processes in place for identifying, evaluating, and managing risk are:

- maintenance of a corporate risk register
- regular review of risks by the directors/senior management team
- establishment of directorate risk registers
- development project proposals incorporate risk evaluations, and implementation plans include risk registers to manage project risks
- progress reports to the directors/senior management team on progress against key projects
- annual stewardship returns and reports from ESRC directors on their operation of devolved systems and management of risk
- peer review processes covering the conduct of ESRC core business of commissioning of research
- ESRC scientific advisory board papers include explicit reference to risk assessments
- annual validation procedures (within the finance assurance programme) conducted on a Cross Council basis to oversee the regularity of research expenditure at research Institutions
- monitoring/reporting arrangements on business critical projects: UK Household Longitudinal Study. This project will establish a major new longitudinal study of the UK population across 40,000 households
- a new major element relates to venture funding where new procedures in 2006-07 include the requirement for a risk assessment for all proposals put to directors.

Steps are also in hand to further develop structures, processes and controls to improve management of risk ie:

- further development of directorate and Initiative risk registers and linkages including continual assessment of the financial control environment
- corporate project management guidance.

In addition, the Cross Research Council Finance Management Group (FMG) developed a collective financial risk register which is now being managed at a cross council level. This provides for an additional dimension of risk management in terms of identification and management of risks and cross council consistency and bench marking. This register is expected to be regularly reviewed and updated at a Cross Council level.

ESRC has a business continuity plan and a business continuity team made up of key personnel from each of ESRC's business and support areas.

To facilitate consideration of potential threats to business continuity, and integration with cross-council and IT-specific disaster recovery plans, risks have been grouped into the following categories:

- disruption of Non-IT infrastructure
- disruption of IT infrastructure
- information systems.

A number of different scenarios, under each of these headings, have been identified and analysed. Where applicable, specific contingency arrangements and disaster recovery strategies have been determined for incidents.

The following elements of the plan have been identified as critical and are tested and reviewed on a regular (at least annual) basis:

- emergency response
- disaster recovery
- contingency arrangements.

The business continuity plan has been approved at senior management team (SMT) level, by the Chief Executive's Directors' Group, and has also received the endorsement of ESRC's Audit Committee. It will be subject to independent review, on a regular basis, by the Research Councils' internal audit service.

Review of effectiveness

As Accounting Officer, I also have responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal control. My review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control is informed by:

- regular reports by ESRC's internal audit including the Head of Internal Audit's independent opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of ESRC systems of internal control
- the executive managers within ESRC who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework, and who provide annual reports on their stewardship and management of risk
- comments made by the external auditors in their management letter and other reports
- the Audit Committee's review of internal controls and risk management processes
- research award validation procedures which provide assurance on the regularity of research project expenditure at Universities and other research bodies.

I have been advised by the Council and the Audit Committee on the implications of the result of my review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control. A plan is in place to address weaknesses and ensure continuous improvement of the system.

28 June 2007



Ian Diamond
Accounting Officer

Accounts

The Certificate and Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General to the Houses of Parliament

I certify that I have audited the financial statements of the Economic and Social Research Council for the year ended 31 March 2007 under the Science and Technology Act 1965. These comprise the Statement of Net Expenditure, the Balance Sheet, the Cash flow Statement and Statement of Total Recognised Gains and Losses and the related notes. These financial statements have been prepared under the accounting policies set out within them. I have also audited the information in the Remuneration Report that is described in that report as having being audited.

Respective responsibilities of the Council, Chief Executive and Auditor

The Council and Chief Executive as Accounting Officer are responsible for preparing the Annual Report, the Remuneration Report and the financial statements in accordance with the Science and Technology Act 1965 and Secretary of State for Trade and Industry directions made thereunder and for ensuring the regularity of financial transactions. These responsibilities are set out in the Statement of Council's and Chief Executive's Responsibilities.

My responsibility is to audit the financial statements and the part of the remuneration report to be audited in accordance with relevant legal and regulatory requirements, and with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland).

I report to you my opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view and whether the financial statements and the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited have been properly prepared in accordance with the Science and Technology Act 1965 and Secretary of State for Trade and Industry directions made thereunder. I report to you whether, in my opinion, certain information given in the Annual Report, which comprises of the Statement by the Chair and Chief Executive, Members of Council, Audit Committee, Senior Staff and Financial and Other Information sections is consistent with the financial statements. I also report whether in all material respects the expenditure and income have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

In addition, I report to you if the Economic and Social Research Council has not kept proper accounting records, if I have not received all the information and explanations I require for my audit, or if information specified by HM Treasury regarding remuneration and other transactions is not disclosed.

I review whether the Statement on Internal control reflects the Economic and Social Research Council's compliance with HM Treasury's guidance, and I report if it does not. I am not required to consider whether this statement covers all risks and controls, or form an opinion on the effectiveness of the Economic and Social and Research Council's corporate governance procedures or its risk and control procedures.

I read the other information contained in the Annual Report and consider whether it is consistent with the audited financial statements. I consider the implications for my report if I become aware of any apparent misstatements or material inconsistencies with the financial statements. My responsibilities do not extend to any other information.

Basis of audit opinion

I conducted my audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) issued by the Auditing Practices Board. My audit includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts, disclosures and regularity of financial transactions included in the financial statements and the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgments made by the Council and Accounting Officer in the preparation of the financial statements, and of whether the accounting policies are most appropriate to the Economic and Social Research Council's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

I planned and performed my audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which I considered necessary in order to provide me with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements and the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error, and that in all material respects the expenditure and income have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them. In forming my opinion I also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the financial statements and the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited.

Opinions

Audit opinion

In my opinion:

- the financial statements give a true and fair view, in accordance with the Science and Technology Act 1965 and directions made thereunder by the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, of the state of Council's affairs as at 31 March 2007 and of its net expenditure for the year then ended
- the financial statements and the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited have been properly prepared in accordance with the Science and Technology Act 1965 and Secretary of State for Trade and Industry directions made thereunder
- information given within the Annual Report, which comprises of the the Statement by the Chair and Chief Executive, Members of Council, Audit Committee, Senior Staff and Financial and Other Information sections is consistent with the financial statements.

Audit opinion on regularity

In my opinion, in all material respects the expenditure and income have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

Report

I have no observations to make on these financial statements.

5 July 2007

John Bourn
Comptroller and Auditor General
National Audit Office
157-197 Buckingham Palace Road
Victoria
London SW1W 9SP

Accounts

Statement of net expenditure

	Notes	2006-07 £000	2005-06 Restated (Note 2) £000
Expenditure			
Staff and Council members' costs	4	4,514	4,082
Research	5	99,824	85,943
Postgraduate training	6	46,853	38,456
Knowledge transfer	7	2,306	1,279
Other operating costs	8	6,622	5,762
Net operating costs before financing		160,119	135,522
Interest receivable		(5)	(2)
Notional cost of capital	14	(624)	(352)
Net expenditure for the year		159,490	135,168
Income and expenditure reserve b/f	15	(10,557)	(497)
Grant in aid received	15	140,508	114,864
Funding received from other bodies	3	16,362	10,557
Transfer to I&E - depreciation	15	49	41
Transfer of earmarked funds	15	(469)	(2)
Net expenditure for the year	15	(159,490)	(135,168)
Reversal of notional cost of capital	15	(624)	(352)
I&E reserve c/f	15	(14,221)	(10,557)

All activities are continuing.

Balance sheet as at 31 March 2007

	Notes	2006-07		2005-06
		£000	£000	Restated (Note 2) £000
Fixed assets				
Tangible assets	9 (a)		4,990	4,937
Intangible assets	9 (b)		849	573
			5,839	5,510
Current assets				
Debtors and prepayments	11	13,097		4,309
Cash at bank and in hand	17	11,136		2,836
		24,233		7,145
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	12	(41,361)		(20,924)
Net current liabilities			(17,128)	(13,779)
Total assets less current liabilities			(11,289)	(8,269)
Provision for liabilities and charges	13		(82)	(155)
			(11,371)	(8,424)
Capital and reserves				
Income and expenditure reserve	15		(14,221)	(10,557)
Earmarked reserve	15		516	47
Revaluation reserve	15		2,334	2,086
Total government funds	15		(11,371)	(8,424)

28 June 2007


Ian Diamond
Accounting Officer

Accounts

Cash flow statement for the year ended 31 March 2007

	Notes	2006-07 £000	2005-06 Restated (Note 2) £000
Net cash outflow from operating activities	16	(147,595)	(132,074)
Returns on investments and servicing of finance			
Interest received		5	2
Capital expenditure			
Payments to acquire fixed assets		(980)	(649)
Net cash outflow before financing		(148,570)	(132,721)
Financing			
Grant in aid received		140,508	114,864
Funding received from other bodies		16,362	10,557
Increase / (Decrease) in cash in the year	17	8,300	(7,300)

Statement of total recognised gains and losses for the year ended 31 March 2007

	Notes	2006-07 £000	2005-06 Restated (Note 2) £000
Net expenditure		(159,490)	(135,168)
Capital grant in aid received	15	980	649
Revenue grant in aid received	15	139,528	114,215
Funding received from other bodies	3	16,362	10,557
Reversal of notional cost of capital	14	(624)	(352)
Other recognised gains and losses on revaluation of land and buildings	15	297	471
Total losses recognised in year		(2,947)	(9,628)

Notes to the Accounts

1. Accounting policies

(a) Basis of accounting

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention, modified to include the revaluation of land and buildings.

ESRC has received a Direction on the form of its Accounts issued by the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry. Subject to the exemptions specified in that Direction, the accounts meet the accounting and disclosure requirements of the Companies Act 1985 and the accounting standards issued or adopted by the Accounting Standards Board so far as these requirements are appropriate in accordance with the Financial Reporting (FREM). The ESRC is exempted from producing a note of historical cost profits and losses normally required by Financial Reporting Standard Number 3.

The accounting policies have been applied consistently except for the change in the treatment of the receipt of funding for revenue and general capital purchases which is now treated as a financing inflow and credited directly to reserves rather than being recognised in income for the year (see Note 2).

(b) Fixed assets and depreciation/amortisation

Capital expenditure includes the purchase of land, buildings, equipment and intangible assets such as licences to the value of £1,000 or more.

Intangible and tangible fixed assets are included at cost or at valuation. The basis of valuation for land and buildings is open market value for existing use. Land and buildings are professionally valued every five years. In the intervening period relevant indices are used. Any surplus or deficit arising on revaluation is taken to the Revaluation Reserve, except that any permanent diminution in value is charged to the Income and Expenditure Account in the year in which it is recognised. Increased depreciation charges arising from the revaluation are matched by annual transfers from the Revaluation Reserve to the Income and Expenditure Reserve.

In the opinion of the ESRC there is no material difference between the historic and current cost values of the computing and office equipment. Accordingly these assets have not been revalued and this position has been kept under review.

Provision is made for depreciation/amortisation on tangible and intangible fixed assets, except land, at rates calculated to write off the costs or the valuation of each asset to its estimated residual value evenly over its expected useful life, as follows:

Freehold buildings	60 years
Office and computing equipment	3-10 years
Data licences	5-10 years

The useful economic life of assets is reviewed regularly and where a valuation has provided a more accurate assessment this has been used.

Significant fixed asset acquisitions are depreciated from the month of purchase. Other additions are depreciated by a full year in the year of acquisition.

(c) Ownership of equipment or facilities purchased with Council grants

Equipment or facilities purchased by an institution with research grant funds supplied by the ESRC belong to the institution and are not included in ESRC's fixed assets. Through the conditions of the grant applied to funded institutions, the ESRC reserves the right to determine how such equipment or facilities shall be disposed of and how any disposal proceeds are to be utilised.

(d) Parliamentary grant in aid and other funding

Grant in aid for revenue and general capital purposes should be credited to the Income and expenditure reserve and grant in aid for the purchase of specific assets should be credited to the Government Grant Reserve and released to the Statement of Net Expenditure over the useful life of the asset in amounts equal to the annual depreciation charge (see Note 2). The receipt of funds from other bodies is also treated as detailed above unless goods and services are provided to the entity giving the funding.

(e) Research and development

As a research funding organisation, the ESRC's research and development expenditure is charged to the Statement of Net Expenditure when it is incurred.

The ownership of the intellectual property arising from a research project is made clear from the outset. Normally this rests with the university or institution receiving the ESRC award, unless stated to the contrary. Where there are material returns from intellectual property rights from an ESRC supported award, ESRC reserves the right to reclaim up to one third of the total, up to the value of its original award. Recoveries are credited to the Statement of Net Expenditure when received. Future intellectual property rights arising from the ESRC's research and development have not been included in the accounts as their value in terms of future income is not material and unpredictable.

(f) Operating leases

An operating lease existed covering ESRC's rental obligations on a London office (see Note 13). There were no finance leases.

Notes to the Accounts

(g) Foreign currencies

Transactions in foreign currencies are translated at the rate ruling at the time of the transaction. All gains and losses arising from exchange differences are taken to the Statement of Net Expenditure.

(h) Value added tax

The ESRC is partially exempt for VAT purposes. All expenditure and fixed asset purchases are shown inclusive of VAT where applicable. Residual input tax reclaimable by the application of the partial exemption formula is taken to the Statement of Net Expenditure as a sundry item.

(i) Research grants

ESRC policy is to accrue for the costs of work undertaken at Higher Education Institutions at Balance Sheet date which remain unpaid by ESRC at that date. Future commitments in respect of costs of work yet to be undertaken within approved cash limits at the Balance Sheet date are disclosed in Note 18.

(j) Pensions and early severance costs

Payments are made to the Research Councils' pension schemes in respect of superannuation benefits for ESRC staff.

(k) Notional cost of capital

The financing structure of ESRC does not include specific interest bearing debt but to ensure that the Statement of Net Expenditure bears an appropriate charge for the use of capital in the business in the year, a notional interest charge is included. In accordance with Treasury guidance, the calculation is based on a 3.5 per cent rate of return on average net assets employed at cost or at valuation, and the capital charge is written back to the Income and Expenditure Reserve.

(l) Derivatives and other financial instruments

Financial Reporting Standard Number 13, Derivatives and other Financial Instruments, requires disclosure of the role which financial instruments have had during the period in creating or changing the risks an entity faces in undertaking its activities. Because of the largely non-trading nature of its activities, and the way in which government bodies are financed, ESRC is not exposed to the degree of financial risk faced by business entities. Moreover, financial instruments play a much more limited role in creating or changing risk that would be typical of the listed companies to which FRS 13 mainly applies. ESRC has very limited powers to borrow or invest surplus funds and except for relatively insignificant forward purchases of foreign currency, financial assets and liabilities are generated by day-to-day operational activities and are not held to change the risks facing ESRC in undertaking its activities.

Liquidity risk – ESRC's net revenue resource requirements are financed by resources voted annually by Parliament, and administered as grant in aid through the Office of Science and Innovation, just as its capital expenditure largely is. ESRC is not therefore exposed to significant liquidity risks.

Interest-rate risk – All of ESRC's financial assets and liabilities carry nil or fixed rates of interest. ESRC is not therefore exposed to significant interest-rate risk.

Foreign currency risk – ESRC's exposure to foreign currency risk is not significant. Foreign currency income is negligible and foreign currency expenditure at less than 1 per cent of total expenditure is not significant.

(m) Earmarked reserve

The earmarked reserve has two components and relates to: (i) funds received by ESRC as beneficiary of a will that can only be used for specified purposes; (ii) deposits received from international bodies for specific future research investment. Any income earned is transferred to the reserve from the general fund.

(n) Sustainability funding

In 2005-06, ESRC acted as an agent for DTI/OSI in distributing sustainability funding of £141 million on behalf of all Research Councils. This funding represented an initial contribution from the Science Programme towards the start up of the new Full Economic Cost Research Funding Framework. ESRC's cash Grant in Aid was supplemented by £141 million to provide this funding, which was distributed to HEIs on a pro rata basis determined by the level of Research Council research grant funding provided to each HEI in 2003-04. As the £141,000,000 has been treated by DTI/OSI and received by ESRC as grant in aid the amount has been disclosed in Note 2. However, as the DTI/OSI is accountable for the £141,000,000 through the DTI Resource Account and ESRC has acted as an agent only, the funding and expenditure has not been included in ESRC's Income and Expenditure Account but as a note to the Accounts.

2. Parliamentary grant in aid and prior year adjustment

In 2006-07, the accounting treatment of grant in aid has changed such that non-departmental public bodies should regard grants and grant in aid received for revenue purposes as contributions from controlling parties giving rise to a financial interest in the body. As a result, grant in aid received for revenue purposes is credited to the Income and Expenditure Reserve rather than being recognised as income in the Income and Expenditure Account for the year. As a result the Income and Expenditure Account now shows net expenditure for the year rather than a surplus or deficit and has consequently been renamed 'Statement of Net Expenditure'. Grant in aid for capital purposes is only credited to the Government Grant Reserve if it is for the purchase of a specific asset with all other capital grant in aid credited to the Income and Expenditure reserve.

The presentation of the comparative figures has been restated as a result and a prior year adjustment made to transfer capital grant in aid for general purposes from the Government Grant Reserve to the Income and Expenditure Reserve (see Note 15).

	2006-07 £000	2005-06 £000
Capital grant in aid	980	649
Revenue grant in aid	139,528	114,215
Amount provided for sustainability funding (Note 1 n)	–	141,000
Amount provided for sustainability funding (Note 1 n)	–	(141,000)
Grant in aid credited to income and expenditure reserve	140,508	114,864

All Capital grant in aid related to purchase of fixed assets in general and has therefore been credited in full to the income and expenditure reserve.

The receipt of funds from other bodies is also treated as detailed above unless goods and services are provided to the entity giving the funding. As a result funds previously recorded as other income have been treated as financing in the year and the comparative period has been restated.

3. Funding received from other bodies

	2006-07 £000	2005-06 £000
Contributions from government departments	3,439	3,771
Contributions from non-departmental public bodies	12,275	6,663
Contributions from other bodies	648	123
	16,362	10,557

The funding above has been treated as financing in the year and the comparative period has been restated (Note 2).

4. (a) Staff costs

	2006-07 £000	2005-06 £000
Salaries and wages	3,491	3,145
Social security costs	209	195
Superannuation	656	593
Council members' remuneration	158	149
	4,514	4,082

Notes to the Accounts

4. (b) Staff numbers

The average number of staff employed during the year was 122 full time equivalent.

	2006-07	2005-06
Senior management (Chief Executive and Band 1)	4	4
Managerial (Bands 2, 3, 4)	88	82
Administrative support (Band 5)	30	30
	122	116

At any one time there were up to 13 temporary agency staff covering complemented vacancies or long term absences. During the year the cost of temporary agency staff was £336,000 (2005-06 £231,000) and is included under salaries and wages in Note 4a.

4. (c) Superannuation

The employees of the Council are members of the Research Councils' Pension Schemes (RCPS) which are defined benefit schemes funded from annual grant in aid on a pay as you go basis. The benefits are by analogy to the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme, except that while the schemes provide retirement and related benefits based on final emoluments, redundancy and injury benefits are administered and funded by the Council.

The scheme is administered by the Research Councils' Joint Superannuation Services with the associated grant in aid managed by the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC). The schemes' accounts are prepared by BBSRC, on behalf of the BBSRC Chief Executive as the Accounting Officer for the RCPS. A separate Account is published for the Pension Schemes. Employees' contributions to the scheme are set at 3.5 per cent. The employer's contribution is agreed by the RCPS Board of Management on the recommendation of the Government Actuary's Department and is set at 21.3 per cent of pensionable pay.

The RCPS is an unfunded multi-employer defined benefit scheme but ESRC is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities. A full actuarial valuation was carried out on 31 March 2006 with results being announced in 2007-08. The valuation carried out on 31 March 2002 which changed the rate from 10.1 per cent to 21.3 per cent from 1 April 2005 therefore apply to these accounts. Details are available in the accounts of the Research Councils Pension Scheme.

For 2006-2007, employer's contributions of £652,582 were payable to the RCPS (2005-2006 £593,161) at 21.3 per cent of pensionable pay, based on the salary bands. Employer contributions are to be reviewed every four years following a full scheme valuation by the Government Actuary. The contribution rates reflect benefits as they are accrued, not when the costs are actually incurred, and reflect past experience of the scheme.

5. Research

	2006-07 £000	2005-06 £000
Research programmes	24,577	22,849
Research centres	16,685	14,831
Research resources	5,292	6,698
Research grants	26,866	21,332
Fellowships	4,441	4,280
Venture	971	228
DFID	939	–
Other research	1,147	2,546
International office	552	188
International subscriptions	101	83
International awards	96	–
Teaching and learning	4,724	4,238
Joint infrastructure fund	46	87
Research equipment and facilities (see Note 1c)	13,387	8,583
	99,824	85,943

6. Postgraduate training

	2006-07 £000	2005-06 £000
Advanced course studentships	1,296	1,191
Standard research studentships	39,783	33,050
Training development activities	51	181
A and E	105	163
Language based area studies	1,289	–
Fellowships	4,329	3,871
	46,853	38,456

7. Knowledge transfer

	2006-07 £000	2005-06 £000
Knowledge transfer awards	349	–
Knowledge transfer activities	810	328
Knowledge transfer partnerships	1,147	951
	2,306	1,279

Notes to the Accounts

8. Other operating costs

	2006-07 £000	2005-06 £000
Maintenance	667	546
Office supplies	454	305
Postage and telecommunication	125	72
Archive services	16	20
Management consultancy and other professional fees	445	555
Research evaluation and information contracts	458	242
Auditors' remuneration	36	34
Staff training and subscriptions	87	63
Publicity and distribution	2,362	2,026
Travel and subsistence	394	389
Meetings and catering	138	201
Conference costs	16	15
Recruitment	65	147
VAT/NI services	9	9
RCPO costs	54	42
Legal services/internal audit	89	60
RCUK	220	35
Miscellaneous	47	152
Depreciation and amortisation	948	853
Provision for bad and doubtful debts	(8)	(4)
	6,622	5,762

9. (a) Tangible fixed assets

	Freehold land and buildings £000	IT and office equipment £000	Total £000
Cost/Valuation			
At 1 April 2006	3,069	5,485	8,554
Additions	–	492	492
Revaluation	215	–	215
Disposals	–	(49)	(49)
At 31 March 2007	3,284	5,928	9,212
Depreciation			
At 1 April 2006	–	3,617	3,617
Provided in year	82	654	736
Revaluation	(82)	–	(82)
Disposals	–	(49)	(49)
At 31 March 2007	–	4,222	4,222
Net book value			
31 March 2007	3,284	1,706	4,990
31 March 2006	3,069	1,868	4,937

The freehold land and buildings net book value relates to the Council's share of Polaris House, Swindon. The land and buildings in totality were professionally valued as at 31 March 2006 by Paul Powis (FRICS) of Powis Hughes Chartered Surveyors in accordance with SAVP and RICS guidance notes on an open market value basis. The figure disclosed represents an agreed apportionment of the total valuation.

9. (b) Intangible fixed assets

	Data licenses £000
Cost	
At 1 April 2006	741
Additions	488
At 31 March 2007	1,229
Amortisation	
At 1 April 2006	168
Provided in year	212
At 31 March 2007	380
Net book value	
31 March 2007	849
31 March 2006	573

Notes to the Accounts

10. Science in Society unit

The RCUK Science in Society Unit is hosted by ESRC on behalf of the other Research Councils. The Unit's remit covers science in schools as well as raising public awareness and engagement in science and innovation. A key challenge for the new Unit is to promote a more collective approach to science in society activities both between individual Research Councils and in collaboration with Government Departments, Research Council funded academics and other key organisations.

As all expenditure will be matched by income and reflected in the accounts of other Research Councils, ESRC will post all income and expenditure against Balance Sheet codes rather than Income and Expenditure codes. A creditor or debtor will then be recorded depending on the year-end position.

In 2006-07 the following income and expenditure were attributed to the unit on programme expenditure.

	£000
Income	1,076
Expenditure	(1,120)
	(44)

A debtor of £44 has therefore been reflected in ESRC's 2006-07 accounts and recorded in Other Debts (Note 11).

11. Debtors and pre-payments

	31 March 2007 £000	31 March 2006 £000
Debtors		
Contributions (central government bodies)	2,562	3,946
Other debts (central government bodies)	51	67
Other debts (other bodies)	401	49
	3,014	4,062
Less: provision for bad and doubtful debts	(15)	(23)
	2,999	4,039
Prepayments		
Prepayments (other bodies)	10,098	270
	13,097	4,309

12. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	31 March 2007 £000	31 March 2006 £000
Research accrual (other bodies)	32,155	16,967
Advance receipts (central government bodies)	6,894	2,515
Advance receipts (other bodies)	457	–
Other (central government bodies)	439	492
Other (other bodies)	1,416	950
	41,361	20,924

13. Provisions for liabilities and charges

Provision is being made for onerous rental obligations on a London office leasehold held jointly by the Research Councils. Negotiation of a sub-lease to a third party has left a residual lease obligation of £85,000 pa over the next seven years. ESRC's provision allows for its share along with other minor residual liabilities.

	31 March 2007 £000	31 March 2006 £000
As at 1 April	155	102
Additional provisions made in year	–	94
Provisions utilised	(73)	(41)
As at 31 March	82	155

14. Notional cost of capital

	31 March 2007 £000	31 March 2006 £000
Cost of capital	(624)	(352)
	(624)	(352)

In accordance with Treasury guidance the cost of capital credit has been written back to the Income and Expenditure Reserve.

Notes to the Accounts

15. Reserves and reconciliation of movement in government funds

	Government grants reserve £000	Earmarked reserve £000	Revaluation £000	Capital land £000	Income and expenditure £000	Total government funds £000
As at 1 April 2006	3,216	47	2,086	208	(13,981)	(8,424)
Prior year adjustment	(3,216)	–	–	(208)	3,424	–
1 April 2006 as restated	–	47	2,086	–	(10,557)	(8,424)
Grant in aid received	–	–	–	–	140,508	140,508
Funding received from other bodies	–	–	–	–	16,362	16,362
Revaluation in year	–	–	297	–	–	297
Transfer to income and expenditure – depreciation	–	–	(49)	–	49	–
Transfer of earmarked funds	–	469	–	–	(469)	–
Net expenditure for the year	–	–	–	–	(159,490)	(159,490)
Reversal of notional cost of capital	–	–	–	–	(624)	(624)
As at 31 March 2007	–	516	2,334	–	(14,221)	(11,371)

All capital Grant in aid previously credited to the Government Grant Reserve was received for general capital purchases and has therefore been transferred to the Income and Expenditure Reserve.

16. Reconciliation of the net operating cost before financing to net cash outflow from operating activities

	2006-07 £000	2005-06 Restated £000
Net operating costs before financing	(160,119)	(135,522)
Depreciation / amortisation charges	948	853
(Decrease) / increase in provisions	(73)	53
Decrease / (increase) in debtors	1,040	(920)
Increase in prepayments	(9,828)	(14)
Increase in creditors	20,437	3,476
Net cash outflow from operating activities	(147,595)	(132,074)

17. (a) Reconciliation of movement in net funds

	2006-07 £000	2005-06 £000
Cash at 1 April	2,836	10,136
Increase / (decrease) in cash	8,300	(7,300)
Cash at 31 March	11,136	2,836

17. (b) Breakdown of cash balance

	2006-07 £000	2005-06 £000
Office of Paymaster General	10,620	2,785
Scottish Widows	516	51
Cash at 31 March	11,136	2,836

18. Commitments

(a) Research awards

Future commitments on approved research awards to Higher Education Institutions and other approved research bodies:

		£000
	2007-2008	117,477
	2008-2009	73,732
	2009-2010	38,130
	Later years	23,979
		253,318

(b) Postgraduate training

Future commitments on approved postgraduate awards:

		£000
	2007-2008	35,087
	2008-2009	25,297
	Later years	17,498
		77,882

Notes to the Accounts

19. Contingent liabilities

The Council has no known material contingent liabilities (2005-06 None).

20. Related party transactions

The ESRC is a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) sponsored by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI).

DTI is regarded as a related party. During the year, ESRC has had various material transactions with the DTI and with other entities for which DTI is regarded as the parent Department, viz: Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council; Office of Science and Innovation; Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council; Natural Environment Research Council; Medical Research Council; Particle Physics and Astronomy Research Council; Council for the Central Laboratory of the Research Councils; Arts and Humanities Research Council. In addition ESRC has had various material transactions with other Government Departments and other Central Government bodies, viz: Office for National Statistics; Department for Education and Skills; Higher Education Funding Council for England; Scottish Executive; National Assembly for Wales; Department of the Environment; Department of Transport; Department of Education Northern Ireland; Department for Employment and Learning Northern Ireland; Department for International Development; HM Treasury; Office of the Deputy Prime Minister; Home Office; Department of Works and Pensions.

These Accounts provide disclosure of all material financial transactions with those who have been defined as 'Directors'. In the ESRC context this has been taken to include senior executive staff, as at Section 6 of the Remuneration Report, and all Council members. In addition disclosure is provided in respect of members of ESRC Scientific Advisory Boards, which are used to make recommendations on research and training awards.

During the year, ESRC did not enter into any transactions with any such Directors. However it did enter into a number of material transactions with Institutions employing Board/Council members who had no direct interest in the award concerned (Table A). None of the Board/Council members were involved in the recommendation of awards to the Institution where they are a senior member of staff or member of the Governing body. Under ESRC regulations the Audit Committee chairman reviews and approves all awards to Council and Board members.

Information is disclosed on material financial transactions with any related party of these senior staff, Council and Board members (Table B).

In addition, ESRC made a number of payments in respect of ESRC funded awards to Institutions where Board/Council members were the named Principal Investigator. None of the disclosed Board/Council members were involved in the approval of awards to the Institution where they were named as the Principal Investigator (Table C).

Table A

Council/Board Members

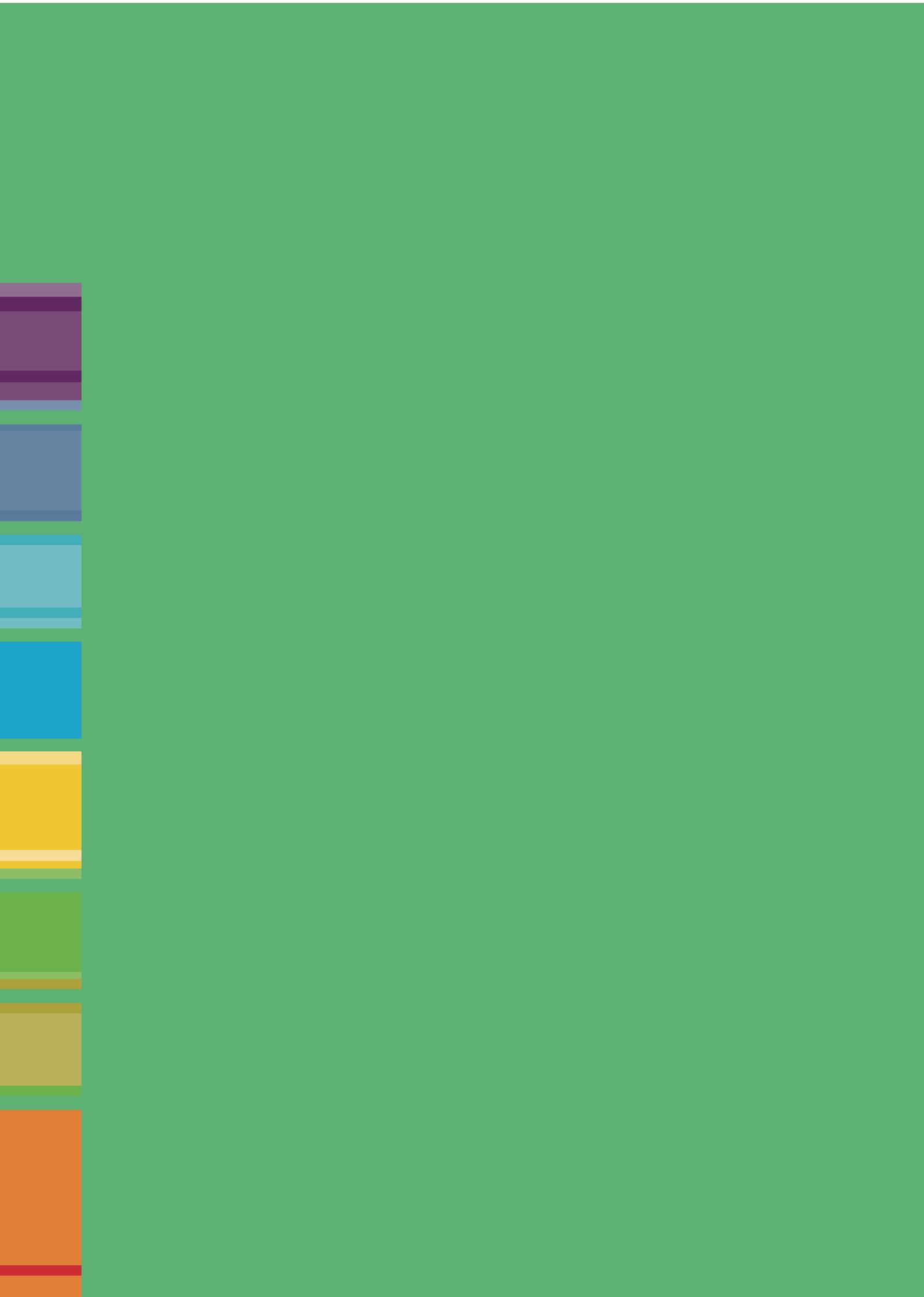
	Institution	No of Awards	Amount £
Professor P Broadfoot	University of Gloucestershire	1	113,585
Ms F Cairncross	University of Oxford	94	6,090,218
Professor F Devine	University of Manchester	82	6,551,917
Professor C Jeffrey	University of Edinburgh	68	3,326,263
Professor M Lamb	University of Cambridge	63	4,027,820
Professor A Pettigrew	University of Bath	23	1,374,352
Professor C Propper	University of Bristol	74	2,448,830
Professor J Rees	London School of Economics and Political Science	71	4,885,464

Table B

Council/Board Members	Related party	No. of Awards held by related party	Amount paid to related party £
Professor J Fairhead	Wife	1	279,039
Dr S Witherspoon	Husband	1	488,382
Professor J Field	Partner	1	5,963

Table C

Council/Board Members	Institution	No. of Awards	Aggregate Amount £
Professor O Attanasio	Institute for Fiscal Studies	3	311,870
Professor G Boyne	Cardiff University	1	62,901
Professor J Bremner	Lancaster University	1	84,759
Professor J Brewer	University of Aberdeen	1	35,677
Professor A Edwards	University of Oxford	1	2,625
Professor B Francis	Lancaster University	1	231,777
Dr V Gayle	University of Stirling	2	22,337
Professor K Gilhooly	University of Hertfordshire	1	16,817
Professor G Hodgkinson	University of Leeds	1	141,891
Professor J Williams	University of Leeds	1	27,884
Professor S Wheeler	Queens Belfast	1	2,741
Professor R Walker	University of Oxford	1	48,085
Professor S Virdee	University of Glasgow	1	53,282
Professor M Vihman	University of York	2	132,029
Professor C Howe	University of Cambridge	1	31,865
Professor C Jeffrey	University of Edinburgh	1	60,251
Professor M Martin-Jones	University of Birmingham	1	60,690
Professor M Overton	University of Exeter	1	62,690
Professor E Page	London School of Economics and Political Science	1	2,710
Professor A Pettigrew	University of Bath	1	6,698
Professor E Robinson	University of Warwick	2	59,839
Professor C Sedikides	University of Southampton	2	51,623
Professor M Slade	University of Warwick	1	21,277
Professor R Spears	Cardiff University	2	89,100
Professor P Taylor-Gooby	University of Kent	2	590,581





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The ESRC is an independent organisation, established by Royal Charter in 1965, and funded mainly by the Government.

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Published by TSO (The Stationery Office) and available from:

Online

www.tsoshop.co.uk

Mail, Telephone, Fax & E-mail

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ISBN 978-0-10-294709-0



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